



S S P X



The Angelus

“Instaurare omnia in Christo”

A Catholic Primer on Art

Beauty and Its Variations

The Beauty and Goodness
of All Things

Ecclesiastical Architecture

The image shows the interior of a Gothic cathedral, characterized by its soaring height and intricate stonework. Tall, slender columns line the nave, supporting a high, vaulted ceiling. A balcony with a wooden railing and a pipe organ is visible on the right side. The architecture is filled with detailed carvings and statues, including a prominent figure in the foreground. Light streams in from high, arched windows, creating a dramatic play of light and shadow.

A Catholic Primer on Art

Art and faith: a combination that has accompanied the Church for more than 2,000 years, a combination that still today we must value more in our daily lives as Catholics. The confluence of the supernatural Faith God revealed to men and art as a human expression of belief, adoration, and wonder before God, His Beauty and His infinite Love is essential for Catholic life.

May this issue of *The Angelus* help to disclose the beauty of art and faith!



Letter from the Publisher

Every day at Mass, we priests pray part of Psalm 26 at the Lavabo: “O Lord, I have loved the beauty of Thy house, and the place where Thy glory dwelleth.” St. Augustine tells us that the house spoken of here is a symbol of the Church. But if we should love the beauty of the Church, what does this mean?

This issue is dedicated to art and architecture, which intrinsically involve notions such as beauty and therefore also goodness and truth. Though we don't pretend to exhaust such an expansive topic, we provide herein some fundamental principles to help us appreciate our heritage, understand some grasp of the exterior manifestations of the Faith, and the glory of God which inspires it all.

As always, there are extremes to avoid; on the one hand, a purely subjective valuation of art and beauty that reduces everything to “the eye of the beholder.” On the other hand, we must beware of an oversimplification of equating beauty with truth or goodness. At the same time, we give some glimpse of the various styles of Catholic art and architecture, each style of which alone could fill several issues with their unique histories and philosophies. It is our hope that these pages inspire you to read and study further!

In Christ the King,
Fr. Arnaud Rostand, Publisher

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The Angelus

“Instaurare omnia in Christo”

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Beauty and Its Variations

by Fr. Dominique Bourmaud, SSPX

Few notions of philosophy have been more muddled and distorted and contradicted than that of beauty. For the moderns, the beautiful is devoid of any objectivity, according to the statement that “beauty is in the eye of the beholder.” Yet, this view should be counterbalanced by the existence of factors which, to most people, judge some things beautiful and others ugly. Do we not all enjoy and rest in the face of a gracious sunset or a chain of snow-capped mountains?

St. Augustine was hinting at the reality of beauty when he raised the following question: *“I shall ask whether things are beautiful because they bring pleasure or rather they bring pleasure because they are beautiful. And doubtlessly, they will answer that they bring pleasure because they are beautiful.”*

Pleasurable Knowledge

How can we define beauty? The Greeks identified it with health, strength, virtue, and beautiful appearance. For them, the desire of physical beauty, as much as of artistic and virtuous beauty, was essential in education and culture. It is a property of the divinity because beauty is associated with, and manifests, perfection. Aristotle after Plato digs into the real properties of aesthetic and moral beauty when he defines it as what is agreeable and desirable in itself.

St. Thomas most simply and wisely calls the beautiful “what gives pleasure on sight.” It involves two things: vision and pleasure. Firstly and mainly, beauty is an act of knowledge, a vision at first sight. This knowledge of the true



involves the mind, but also, most importantly for us, the two most cognitive senses of sight and hearing, which refer particularly to the beautiful as is readily seen in the Fine Arts, say, of sculpture and music. Secondly, beauty brings in joy; not any joy, but the joy obtained from that knowledge. Beauty is connected with the ‘true’ as known, but under the aspect of pleasurable. This is the difference between receiving news from a plain teller, and the same news eloquently described by an actor. In the first case, we have the truth of the news told, in the second we relish the beauty of the tale.

The ugly breeds restlessness, disorder, and upset; the beautiful causes peace and joy. And for an object to delight the mind, it needs to be perfectly proportioned to the knower. Said otherwise, for a beautiful object to produce these soothing effects, it needs the three conditions of integrity (the presence of all members, say, in a statue of Jupiter), of harmony of the parts (the proportion which brings order and unity, say, the balance of the musical instruments in a symphony), and of clarity. Why clarity, why brightness? Because light beautifies, whereas darkness and opacity are ugly and dreary. A thing is not beautiful simply because it has light, but because this light is delightful and pleasing. For the Scholastics, “beauty is the splendor of form shining on the proportioned parts of matter.” For instance, a color is only beautiful when it marks the triumph of the form over matter.

The Varieties of Beauty

These basic considerations on beauty already give us a sense of the great variety of the presence of the beautiful in things and its grasp by men. A beautiful color washes the eye, and a brisk Mozart theme flatters the ear, but the mind registers the brilliance and rejoices in it: we cannot but love it. What is beautiful is of necessity good, as the Greek word *kaloskagathos*—pretty ‘n good—was coined to mark this twin property of things. The object is at once delightful, lovable, and pleasurable. Even in these cases, their beauty comes from

their relation to the mind reading in them that clarity of form. The latter shines on matter in most varied ways, which Maritain explains in *Art and Scholasticism* (London: Sheed and Ward): “At one time, it is the sensible brilliance of colour or tone, at another the intelligible clarity of an arabesque, a rhythm or an harmonious balance, an activity or a movement, or again the reflection upon things of some human or divine thought, but above all is the profound splendour of the soul shining through, of the soul which is the principle of life and animal energy or the principle of spiritual life, of pain, and passion. There is also a more exalted splendour, the splendour of Grace, which the Greeks never knew.” Compare for example the photos of Charles de Foucault prior to his conversion and his later years, and especially his fiery but loving eyes.

If the beautiful is found in many different forms according to how different objects affect the diverse senses and reach the understanding mind, it is going to be received by men, and that reception is going to be greatly affected by the viewer or hearer. If anyone is able to appreciate the dance and contours of colours in Raphael’s school of philosophy, not everyone is ready to tackle the subtleties of the Sonnets of Shakespeare. Beauty, especially expressed in the Fine Arts, is an acquired taste, most valuable and profitable when gained, but easily missed by a vast majority, who long for easy entertainment and are unprepared to unlock the greatness of cultural masterpieces of all time.

Because it is found in such varied things, beauty, the offspring of goodness and truth, is analogous on a par with being, truth or life. It is so analogous and flexible that it can be truly said of God, Supremely Beautiful, of Whose face things on earth and angels in heaven are only a poor reflection. The mind rejoices in the beautiful because in it, it finds itself again. This allows the soul of a St. Francis of Assisi to return thanks to their Author, speaking of “Brother Sun” and “Sister Poverty,” or as St. Ignatius talking to the flower: “Little rose, keep quiet! I know Whom you want to talk about!” Beauty of itself carries the soul beyond creation. The romantic poet Baudelaire speaks of this >

insatiable thirst for something beyond: “It is that immortal instinct for the beautiful which makes us consider the world and its pageants as a glimpse of, a correspondence with, Heaven.” That is why anything truly beautiful stirs some strange, nostalgic inner nerve whereby we wish that time would stay still forever and allow us to contemplate and rest and delight in this timeless contemplation, an anticipation of heaven.

Beauty in the Fine Arts

Beauty is also intimately related to arts. Some beauty is to be found in nature outside things artificial, but any real art—we are speaking of the ‘Fine Arts’—aims at the production of beauty. Poignant happiness, found in the ecstatic sentiment of the contemplative, is typical of beauty when seen. This is somewhat produced in art which concentrates truth and goodness: the riches and intensity of associations involved in a compressed statement. Just think of the luscious harmonies enshrined in the lively themes of Bach’s fugues, happily mixing order and originality. Or think of the melodious line of St. Augustine’s *Confessions* (Book I, Ch. 1): “Thou hast made us for Thyself, and our hearts are restless till they rest in Thee,” which evokes much more than the plain catechism answer: “God is man’s last end who alone can give him happiness.”

This artistic exposure which shows us a great deal of truth in a simple glance awakens in us the desire to see all truth in a simple glance, which is reserved to the mystics. To saints like Francis and Thomas Aquinas, but not to artists, were reserved to taste the sweetness of God and therefore to judge all things “as rubbish”: not only the *Summa Theologica*, but the Parthenon and Our Lady of Chartres, the Sistine Chapel and the Mass in B minor—these are all rubbish destined to be burned on the Last Day. But the “rubbish” of the saints is the golden straw of earthly pilgrims in need of some human consolation.

In fact, art is meant to lead the intellect towards its complete object and happiness. Thus, artists and works of art are to be classified

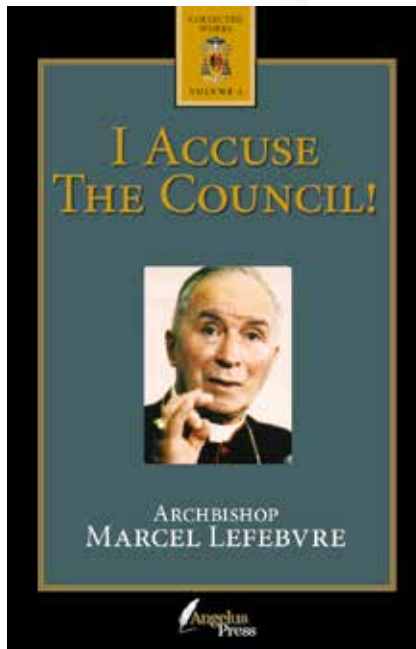
according to their civilizing ability, which corresponds to their degree of spirituality, and ultimately to the nature of our ‘god.’ Said in Fra Angelico’s words: “Art demands great tranquility, and to paint the things of Christ, the artist must live with Christ.” Great art is always an icon, a window opened to the invisible world. Speaking of Christian art in general and of liturgy in particular, Maritain has this to say: “There is nothing more beautiful than a High Mass, a dance before the Ark in slow motion, more majestic than the advance of the hosts of Heaven. And yet, the Church, in the Mass, is not searching for beauty or decorative motifs or a means of touching the heart. Her sole object is worship and union with her Saviour, and from this loving worship an excess of beauty overflows.”

Léon Bloy made a bold statement about the muses: “Art is an aboriginal parasite of the skin of the first serpent.” He was alluding to the foolishness of snobbish or estranged productions. He might also be referring to some periods, like the Renaissance, in which art was cultivated for its own sake. This raises the question of morality in art. Is art for art’s sake or is it a means for propaganda of a social or a religious doctrine? Perhaps the best refutation of the amorality of art is the Gospel parables, in which Our Lord uses great poetry to lead souls to the knowledge of the ultimate end. And, although the artist may use very scary portraits, like Iago in Shakespeare’s *Othello*, or the twisted bodies of Michelangelo’s *Last Judgment*, they are necessary elements in the entire frame, beautiful as a whole, which describes the struggle of good vs. evil. Such production is both pleasurable and educational, as all great art should be.

Fr. Dominique Bourmaud has spent the past 26 years teaching at the Society seminaries in America, Argentina, and Australia. He is presently stationed at St. Vincent’s Priory, Kansas City, where he is in charge of the priests’ training program.

I Accuse the Council

“In the discussions which appear in these pages, nothing less than the Catholic Faith and the future of so-called Christian nations is at stake.” — Archbishop Marcel Lefebvre



Now back in print with a beautiful new collectible cover, this excellent work is a compilation of twelve interventions made by Archbishop Marcel Lefebvre during the Second Vatican Council. With prophetic foresight, these twelve official statements warn against the modern errors, which have sadly, like the smoke of Satan, entered the Church, plus additional statements on the Council itself.

Interventions on:

- The Orientation of the Council
- The Purpose of the Council
- Collegiality
- The Role of Bishops
- Ecumenism
- Religious Liberty
- The Danger of Ambiguous Expressions
- Missionary Activity
- The Church in the Modern World
- Much More!



Pankalia

The Beauty and Goodness of All Things



by Dr. Peter Chojnowski

I remember distinctly attending a lecture when I was a graduate student in New York City. It was a lecture by Prof. John Caputo on “post-modernism.” The only part of the lecture that I recall is when Prof. Caputo used an example given by Friedrich Nietzsche, the great Nihilist of the 19th century, to explain his own philosophical view of the world. As regards the “predicament” of Man in this world, Nietzsche said that, “man shouts out his greatest hopes and dreams to the universe...and the universe turns towards him, and yawns.” In other words, the universe *in its very being* has no meaning, no purpose, no value. Since the professor was agreeing with this nihilistic outlook on the world, someone asked him why he was against apartheid—the social and political organization of South Africa at the time. Since he could not really argue that some state of things was “bad” in any kind of objective way, he had to admit that he simply “chose” it as “better” because he simply felt it was better.

The Nietzschean valueless, purposeless and meaningless universe is what *necessarily* results from portraying the Creator God as a mere “idea” that Modern Man has “killed”; *Dios o Nada* (God or Nothing), as St. Teresa of Avila said. Before the 19th century, the last time there was a full-scale



¹ Umberto Eco, *The Aesthetics of Thomas Aquinas*, trans. Hugh Bredin (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1988), pp. 21-22.

² *Ibid.*, p. 20.

assault on the Catholic understanding of the created universe as *good and beautiful* in *all* of its parts was in the 13th century when the Albigensian heretics sought to strip the *material creation* of goodness and, instead, portray it as *necessarily and essentially evil*. Is a “yawning” universe much different? The response at the time on the part of St. Thomas Aquinas, who’s Dominican Order was intentionally directed to oppose the heretics, was to take up the theme of *the transcendental properties of being* in order to explain why *all things*, in so far as they exist, have an inner value and fullness. For St. Thomas, a proper appreciation for reality showed that there was an indispensable union between being and value.¹

The Transcendental Properties

When St. Thomas Aquinas, and the great philosophers of the Western tradition, looked at “being” or “all that exists,” they looked at it with realistic and objectivist minds that are not prejudiced by an ideological commitment to remove the Sovereign God from the universe. The “transcendental properties” are like the colored light that we would see if we shined a white light into a prism. The single white stream of light is broken up into rays of the various colors of the rainbow. The light is the same; the prism simply allows the light to reveal other aspects or “modes” of that same one stream of light.² Such is the case with the transcendental properties of being: >

³ St. Thomas Aquinas, *Truth*, trans. James V. McGlynn and Robert Milligan (Indianapolis, IN: Hackett Publishing, 1994), I, Ic.

⁴ Eco, *Aesthetics*, p. 22.

⁵ St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, I, Q. 5, Art. 4 ad 1. Cf. Jacques Maritain, *Art and Scholasticism and the Frontiers of Poetry*, trans. Joseph W. Evans (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1974), p. 23.

⁶ Aquinas, *ST*, I, Q. 39, Art. 8. Cf. Eco, *Aesthetics*, p. 103.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 117.

oneness, goodness, truth, and I would say beauty. They add nothing to being itself, they are not like other attributes like the shine on the newly waxed car or the frost on a rose—these attributes only characterize *some very definite things*; the transcendental properties can be discerned in every being and are found in every being that is, *insofar as it is*. Everything, insofar as it exists, can be grasped by an intellect—hence being is true; all can be desired as fulfilling and, hence, is good; everything, insofar as it is a thing, has an inner unity and self-identity—and is, therefore, one. Everything, *insofar as it is*.³ Since these aspects can be recognized concerning beings that exist around us, we can infer that such characteristics, stripped of their limiting imperfections, exist in God who made all things *ex nihilo* (from nothing). God is not good, but rather *Goodness-Itself*.⁴

When we consider the question of the status of *beauty* as a transcendental property of being, a quality and characteristic which all things would have insofar as they exist, the answer would seem to be clear-cut; St. Thomas, when commenting on the transcendental properties of Aristotle and the Arab Commentators on Aristotle in his *De Veritate*, lists the properties as: the one, a thing, a being, something, the good, and the true. *Everything that is real* has the unity of being one, it is potentially desirable (good), it can be known by a mind (true), it is a thing, a being, and it is something. What about *beauty*? Can it be that one of the most uplifting perfections of God, that He is, as St. Augustine calls Him in the *Confessions*, *Beauty ever ancient and ever new*, not be manifested in His Creation wherever His creative finger touched? To push it to its extreme, just like St. Thomas had no problem speaking of Lucifer as “good” insofar as he exists and, thereby, participates in an attribute of God, could we not say that everything is “beautiful” in so far as it stands outside of nothingness and possesses what St. Thomas calls the *act of existence*?

The Beauty of the Good and the Good of the Beautiful

Being the realist that he was, when called upon to *define* the beautiful, he always gave very common-sense definitions that were in accord with universal human experience. Beauty is *id quod visum placet*, that which *when seen pleases*,⁵ or beauty is that “which is brightly colored” (*unde quae habent colorem nitidum, pulchra esse dicuntur*).⁶ How can beauty have a more transcendent and ultimate character when it must be “seen”? Not only must it be *seen*, but it must *please* when it is seen because of its *suavitas coloris*, its pleasing color.⁷ How can beauty then apply to all things—many of which do *not* please the eye—and to God, who cannot be seen by the human eye as God?

The belief concerning the beauty of *all things* was a belief and sentiment coming into the Middle Ages from many sources. First and foremost was the Bible, in which the beauties of God’s creation were continually extolled. The verse in the Book of Wisdom, “But thou hast ordered all things in measure, and number, and weight” (11:21) inspired St. Augustine’s concepts of *modus*,



⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 23.

⁹ Pseudo-Dionysius, *The Divine Names*, trans. C. E. Rolt (New York: Macmillan, 1920), IV, 7.

¹⁰ St. Thomas Aquinas, *Commentary on The Divine Names*, IV, 8, cited in Eco, *Aesthetics*, pp. 27-28.

¹¹ St. Thomas Aquinas, *Truth*, 22, 2 ad 22.

¹² St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa*, I, Q. 16, Art. 4.

¹³ *Ibid.*, I-II, Q. 27, Art. 3 ad 1.

forma, and *ordo* (dimension or quantity, form, and order), which appear everywhere in medieval philosophy and theology, employed sometimes as a definition of beauty and sometimes as a definition of the good.⁸

The philosophical works which provided St. Thomas Aquinas with his opportunity to express his teaching on the beauty of all things and the close affinity between the good and the beautiful were the prestigious writings of a Syrian monk of the fifth century, so called Pseudo-Dionysius. According to Dionysius' *The Divine Names*, "The beautiful and the good are the same; all beings desire the beautiful and the good with respect to every cause. No being fails to partake of the beautiful and the good."⁹ In his attempt to explain Dionysius' grand vision of a world universally partaking in the *power* of the good and the beautiful, St. Thomas says in his *Commentary*, "Everything that exists comes from beauty and goodness that is from God, as from an effective principle. And things have their being in beauty and goodness as if in a principle that preserves and maintains [what Thomistic philosophy would call the Efficient Cause]. And they turn toward beauty and goodness and desire them as their end [the Final Cause]...And all things are and all things become because of beauty and goodness, and all things look to them, as to an exemplary cause, which they possess as a rule governing their activities."¹⁰ So not only is the Creator of All Things *explicitly identified with the Good and the Beautiful*, the good and the beautiful are principles which *preserve and maintain* things, *attract* all things toward the fulfilling goals that God has set before them, and *govern* all things by serving as a model that governs their activities. Not only this. The good and the beautiful are both characterized by their possession of two qualities, namely *claritas* and *consonantia* (*i.e.*, clarity or radiance, and right-proportion). These are *the* primary attributes of the things we call beautiful, while also being "included in the essential character of the good."¹¹

What is the difference then between the good and the beautiful as transcendental properties that qualify and characterize *all things insofar as they exist*? According to St. Thomas, "The beautiful and the good are identical in the subject [*i.e.*, within the beautiful and good things themselves]. *Claritas* and *consonantia*, which are sources of beauty, are also an aspect of the good, insofar as they are effects of the Good [*i.e.*, the Good Itself] which *creates and orders* [emphasis mine]. Nonetheless, the beautiful and the good differ conceptually [*ratione*], that is, according to the way in which they are conceived, according to the chosen point of view."¹² "Whereas the good, being *what all things desire*, properly relates to the satisfaction of appetite and with a 'goal' towards which action moves, the beautiful refers to something, *the mere mental or visual apprehension of which gives pleasure* [emphasis mine]."¹³ While good things or, rather, the goodness of all things entices us with promises of fulfillment and ultimate happiness, the beauty of all things, shining with the light of God-given form and with the clarity of visual or intellectual contours, beckons us be still and merely rejoice in the *splendor of form which we find in the other*.



Ecclesiastical Architecture

by Dr. Marie-France Hilgar

From the fall of the Roman Empire, in A.D. 476, until almost 1200, architecture followed a style that we call Romanesque. Seven hundred years is a long time, and art neither stands still nor changes over night. In the beginning, architects tried to imitate Roman architecture, but it became more and more altered, especially in the 11th century, because of the Byzantine element. We can distinguish two periods: the primordial, or Latin Romanesque style from the 5th to 11th centuries, and the secondary Roman style in the 11th and 12th centuries.

Roman Style

Few buildings remain from the first period. Walls are thick and built of stones or bricks.

At point of stress, at the arches for instance, builders thicken the walls with piers, or buttresses. The early churches were rather low, simple structures. The thick walls were pierced by small windows with round arched heads. The columns in the interior and exterior were heavy and squat. They supported awkward capitals. A typical early Romanesque church was approached through an atrium that was surrounded by arcades of columns and round arches. The church itself was entered through the narthex, or porch. Inside the building, two or four rows of columns formed three or five aisles that ran the length of the interior, the center aisle, the nave, being wider. Above the rows of columns and arches defining the nave was usually another arcade of arches. Above this was a row of windows. This area of windows alternating



with wall places was known as the clerestory. Above all was the roof itself. At the far end of the nave was a semicircular apse, or sanctuary, in front of which was the altar. In front of the apse, short wings, or transepts, projected to the right and left. The early Romanesque churches were simple, sometimes with exposed wooden roofs. In general, the exteriors were plain in design, and except for arcades of columns and round arches, had little decoration. At the sides, or jambs, of the doors and windows, several receding columns or round shafts carried semicircular arches. Vestiges of primordial Romanesque style are not numerous. St. Martin de Ligugé, a Benedictine abbey founded in 361, still shows the 7th-century wall with arcade and twin windows. Notre-Dame de Nazareth Cathedral in Vaison-la-Romaine goes back to the 6th or 7th century. The chevet consists of an apse with a chapel supported by round Roman capitals and column drums on either side. In 1993 foundations going back to late antiquity were laid bare west of the cathedral. Other examples of primordial Romanesque style include the church of Germigny-des-Prés,

erected at the beginning of the 9th century.¹ The Abbey of St. Philibert in Tournus went through so many turmoils for so many centuries that in 960 a church was built that was going to be able to withstand all invaders. Rarely has a church completely built before 1120 remained intact. St. Bénigne in Dijon was originally built in 535. The crypt preserves its original layout, an inner circle ringed by an arcade of eight columns, and surrounded by another ring of sixteen columns with a circular ambulatory that opens onto a small rectangular chapel in which the relics of St. Bénigne are venerated. There is also the Basilica of St. Rémy in Reims where Clovis was baptized in 496 and which was totally revamped in the 11th and 12th centuries.

The secondary Romanesque style flourished in the 11th and 12th centuries. By then the flat wooden roofs were replaced by barrel-vaults of stone, vaults resembling half a cylinder. Sometimes there were cross-vaults, where the vaulting of the nave was broken into bays or divisions. At each pier or cluster of columns dividing a bay, a slender column went up to

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Notre-Dame de Sénanque is a Cistercian abbey near the village of Gordes in the department of the Vaucluse in Provence. The Sénanque Abbey was founded in 1148 under the patronage of Alfant, bishop of Cavaillon, and Raymond Bérenger II, Count of Provence, by Cistercian monks who came from Mazan Abbey in the Ardèche.



Theme A Catholic Primer on Art

the arched ceiling and supported a projecting rib spanning the nave. Each bay of the ceiling was further divided by diagonal cross arches, or ribs. This new use of arches allowed for larger churches to be built. Think Paray-le-Monial, former monastery church of Notre-Dame, Vézelay's St. Madeleine, the early Mont St. Michel where one arch in the arcades corresponds to two gallery-arched windows above. The strongly projected response extends to the edge of the wooden barrel-vault, which looks out of place above the nave. Also, think as well of the Abbaye-aux-Hommes built by William the Conqueror, where the exterior tall spires soar over clusters of small ones, giving the church a vertical look; and also Conques, Saint-Sernin, Saint-Nectaire, Saint-Savin-sur-Gartempe, all built between 1065 to 1080.

Let us go back to Vézelay. It was founded in 858 by Gerard de Roussillon. The nave was rebuilt immediately after a fire destroyed it in 1120. Together with the narthex, which fits exactly to the nave, there are thirteen bays. Cross-shaped piers with engaged columns on all four sides

carry the under-arch which supports the arcades and the transverse arches of the vaulting in both the nave and aisles. Square responds demarcate the semi-circular columns from the wall and make the bay articulation clearer. A horizontal course, which follows all the articulations, marks the top of the first story. In the smooth wall above, there are windows framed by the wall ribs of the groin vaulting (a type of vaulting caused by two equally large barrel-vaults crossing at right angles; the angles formed by the intersecting vaults is the groin).

The word "Gothic" is the name given to the style of medieval architecture that prevailed for about 300 years. The name was first used by the builders of the Renaissance period to describe what they considered to be a barbarous kind of architecture. It was in memory of the Goths, who never built anything but rather happily destroyed everything in their way. So, at one time, "Gothic" was a derisive term.



Transept of the Sénanque Abbey-church, window and ancient rosette of alabaster





Light and Graceful Gothic

The distinguishing feature of the Gothic style is the pointed arch. Gothic builders carried the principle of forces in equilibrium, or dynamic architecture, to a stage undreamed of by less experienced Romanesque craftsmen. They developed a light, graceful style. A Gothic cathedral is composed of a skeleton structural system, where slender piers of stone carry light stone ribs to form a frame for the stone vaults above. Piers and clustered columns soar into the air, often for a hundred feet or more. The weight of the vaulting is transmitted by exterior arches, or flying buttresses, to piers or vertical buttresses that extend up the sides. These vertical buttresses often end in pinnacles which add weight and solidity, and give an extra decorative quality. The flying buttresses are a mark of Gothic cathedrals. They were developed in Gothic architecture as an external strut system positioned above the roof structure of the aisles. Since the walls no longer carried the weight of heavy stone vaults, they could be made

much lighter. Gothic walls could be pierced with many windows, and the windows could be increased in size to fill much of the area between the buttresses. With this freedom, came into existence the beautiful stained-glass windows.

The plan of a Gothic cathedral is generally the shape of a Latin cross. The short arms of the cross are formed by the transepts which project at right angles to the nave near the sanctuary. The nave is usually placed in an east-to-west direction, with the main entrance facing west. The shape of the exterior of a Gothic cathedral comes directly from the arrangement of the interior. The long ridge of the steep roof extends the length of the nave. The ridge of the transept roof cuts squarely across, so that the two ridges seen from above, form a cross. Just beneath the roof of the nave, on the long side, are the clerestory windows that light the nave. Below the clerestory windows are the sloping roofs of the side aisles. The main façade is usually flanked by two towers, and between them is the main entrance, richly sculptured, especially around the doors. >



Construction of Cologne Cathedral commenced in 1248 and was halted in 1473, leaving it unfinished. Work restarted in the 19th century and was completed, to the original plan, in 1880.



Theme A Catholic Primer on Art

France is really the cradle of the Gothic style. During the first half of the 13th century, nearly 150 beautiful cathedrals were erected just north and south of the Loire. The Ile-de-France series of cathedrals, and those of the north of France generally, are especially homogeneous and structurally sophisticated. Notre-Dame de Paris is perhaps the most well-known example. Built from 1163, it is the first cathedral constructed of monumental proportions. It is seen as the place where heaven and earth meet, a reflection of divine grandeur. However, the following phase of French Gothic derived from Laon. In an astonishing crescendo, a series of classic Gothic masterpieces—Chartres, Reims, Amiens, Noyon, and Soissons—were all constructed. Notre-Dame de Laon was built around 1190. Thanks to the subdivision of the west elevation into three separate sections, created by shifting the doorways forward with the insertion of deep porticoes while shifting the towers backwards, the harmonic façade gained a new spaciousness accentuated by the colossal dimensions of the openings and the enormous

central rose windows, the focus of the whole composition. This configuration represents a special achievement for Gothic architecture as, for the first time, the twin-towered façade was connected to the internal space and was no longer a separate, independent structure. The cathedral of Notre-Dame de Chartres represents the prototype of a true Gothic cathedral. Its characteristic features are length, a nave and two-aisles floor plan, a tripartite elevation (arcade, triforium, clerestory), followed by a short transept, terminating in a deep sanctuary with an ambulatory and radial chapels. The streamlining of the building lends the cathedral rare grandeur.

The façade of the cathedral of Notre-Dame de Reims presents a continuous sequence of thin, triangular gables above the three-deep portals which are counterbalanced by the clever transformation of the tympanum into windows that allow light to irradiate into the entrance area. The front elevation is divided into three horizontal bands. The rose window is framed by narrow lateral apertures.

The façade of the cathedral of Notre-Dame in



Exterior, side aisle and ceiling. For stained-glass windows see also pages 2-3, 46 and 51. The cathedral of Cologne is the largest Gothic church in Northern Europe and has the second-tallest spires and largest façade of any church in the world. The choir has the largest height to width ratio, 3.6:1, of any medieval church.



The Annunciation: painting on one of the side altars





Amiens (c. 1220) is flanked by two towers which follow the dictates of “harmonious façade.” It is built in a tripartite configuration around the central rose window. In accordance with the quest of reducing the weight of the structure, the architect reduced the thickness of the masonry, stabilizing the towers with enormous projecting buttresses.

The linearity of early French Gothic reached its culmination at Noyon cathedral, second half of the 12th century, when a marked sense of verticality carries through the four levels of the elevation. Fragmenting the masonry produces an effect of lightness and transparency, enhanced by the increase in brightness from bottom to top.

To end our very short list of Gothic cathedrals let us take a look at the south transept of the cathedral of SS. Gervais and Protais in Soissons, built around 1180-1190. Some of the most visible formal characteristics of Gothic architecture are its linearity and its subdivision of internal surfaces. The ribs of the vaults, which are continued all the way down the walls, create cellular spaces. They emphasize the impression

of ephemerality of the walls, creating an airy and translucent atmosphere.

Then came the Renaissance with a strong aversion to every thing Middle-Ages, which will last until Victor Hugo. The Renaissance means the revival of forms from Greek and Roman antiquity. It is marked by the use of columns and other structural elements of ancient buildings. Even more important was a new feeling for space and proportion different from medieval taste. This movement was accompanied by much thinking on the part of architects. They studied the past and searched for eternal laws of architecture.

Exuberant Baroque

The Baroque style, prevalent in the 17th and 18th centuries, was initially linked to the Counter Reformation and is sometimes called the Jesuit style. It was characterized by new exploration of form, light, and dramatic intensity. Distinctive features of Baroque may include >

The Wieskirche is an oval rococo church, designed in the late 1740s. Construction took place between 1745 and 1754, and the interior was decorated with frescoes and with stuccowork in the tradition of the Wessobrunner School.



Everything was done throughout the church to make the supernatural visible. Sculpture and murals combined to unleash the divine in visible form (see more pictures on page 28 and 62).



Theme A Catholic Primer on Art

broader naves, oval floor plan, dramatic use of light, abundance of decorations with large scale ceiling frescoes in the cupolas, illusion effects like trompe-l'oeil, etc. However, the Baroque in France was always subdued. The 17th-century Dome des Invalides with its church of Saint-Louis is generally regarded as the most important building of the century. Noteworthy are the torsade columns of the altar. More torsade columns are found in the church of Val-de-Grace, considered by some as Paris's best example of Baroque architecture with its curving lines, elaborate ornamentation, and harmony of different elements.

The architect of the church of La Madeleine in Paris made extensive use of Corinthian columns: 52 of them, each 20 meters high, carried all around the entire building. The pediment shows the Last Judgment and the church's bronze doors bear relief representing the Ten Commandments. The church is 354 ft. long and 141 ft. wide. It has a single nave and three domes over wide arched bays. A little bit in the same style is the Pantheon, built on a Greek cross plan with massive

Corinthian columns. It was supposed to be the church of St. Genevieve, patron saint of Paris, but was caught in the torment of the Revolution and is now the place where "great" Frenchmen are buried. It is slightly larger than La Madeleine.

The Jesuit style of churches shows two elevations, heaven and earth, as clearly seen in the following: the church of SS. Paul and Louis, which was designed by two Jesuits. The large octolateral dome was a first in Paris and served as inspiration for other structures.

19th and 20th Centuries

The 19th century contented itself with copying the older styles. For instance the church of St. Clotilde in Paris, built from 1846 to 1858, is neo-gothic. It is best known for its imposing twin spires. The Basilica of the Sacred Heart, 1875-1914, is neo-byzantine. It was built of travertine stones which constantly exude calcite, thus ensuring that the basilica remains white even with weathering and pollution.

The chapel of Notre Dame du Haut in Ronchamp, completed in 1954, is one of the examples of the architecture of Franco-Swiss architect Le Corbusier and one of the most important examples of twentieth-century religious architecture.





The first half of the 20th century was not particularly innovative. The parish of St. John Baptiste de La Salle was born in 1910, around a sensitive political time. The architecture is “humble but original,” as described in the brochure. It is about 50 meters long and has four naves, which is rather nonhabitual. Because of the sloping of the terrain, it was necessary to build steps to the porch, which makes the entrance inaccessible to coffins. An elevator has to be used for that function only! The building of St. Christopher de Javelle started in 1926. It is made mostly of bricks except for the façade. The architect may have been the originator of prefabricated armed concrete elements, speeding the building process enormously. It is a milestone in modern building. A lacy steel construction holds up the barrel-vaulted roof. The church is considered a landmark in the development of modern sacred art. We must admit it has a beauty quite its own. Notre-Dame-de-Toute-Grâce was built between 1937 and 1946. The pointed roof is meant to sustain the large amounts of snow that fall in the Alps. The foundation is solidly anchored in the soil and the church is topped by a massive 28-meter bell tower carefully designed to withstand local tectonic movement. Eight massive pillars are built to a depth of five meters. The interior resembles a Roman chapel with its rectangular nave flanked by two aisles. The sanctuary is semi-circular and surrounded by the ambulatory sitting above the crypt. Arcades mounted on monolithic pillars separate different portions of the structure. Notre-Dame-de-Toute-Grâce is best known for its decorations painted by some of the most famous artists of the century: Chagall, Matisse...

After the Second World War, every architect did his own thing. We will look first at the cathedral of Royan and then at Notre-Dame du Haut. Built in three years following the bombardment of the town of Royan on January 5, 1945, the church is a major building of contemporary religious architecture. It is 45 meters long and 22 meters wide, 36 meters high with a bell tower culminating at 60 meters. The architect used rough concrete and held account of the slope of the ground so the principal

entrance is located partly high. The use of concrete allowed a fast construction and a great architectural audacity. Our last church was completed in 1954. It is considered one of the finest examples of the architecture realized by well-known Le Corbusier and one of the most important of 20th-century architecture. The chapel is a simple design with two entrances, a main altar and three chapels beneath towers. Although the building is small, it is powerful and complex. It is made mostly of concrete, enclosed by thick walls. The upturned roof, supported on columns embedded within the walls, and not on the walls themselves, appear to float above them. In the interior, the spaces left between the walls and roof are filled with clerestory windows as well as asymmetrical ones. Their openings slant at varying degrees, thus letting in light at different angles. The interior walls are white, the ceiling gray. The chapel, informally known as “Ronchamp,” has been described as the first post-modern building.

So many churches, so little time to visit them, so little space to describe them all. Neither time nor styles stand still. We can only wonder what the 21st century will bring to ecclesiastical architecture.

Notes

For more information on the churches of Germigny-des-Prés, Saint-Savin-sur-Gartempe, Notre-Dame la Grande, Saint-Sernin, Saint Peter's Abbey, Cluny, the Cathedral of Saint-Eulalia, Saint Philibert's Abbey, the Basilica of Saint-Madeleine in Vézelay, please refer to my articles in the *Angelus* of October 1999; July 2000; March, April, June, and December 2002; February, April, May, and August 2003.

See also, “Painters and Writers Quarrels: The Val-de-Grace Cupola,” *Laurels*, Winter 1981-82.

John Paul II and

The Genesis of Confusion

by Ann Marie Temple

In the first chapter [of Genesis], the narrative of the creation of man affirms directly, right from the beginning, that man was created in the image of God as male and female....We find ourselves, therefore, almost at the very core of the anthropological reality, the name of which is 'body,' the human body. However, this core is not only anthropological, but also essentially theological. Right from the beginning, the theology of the body is bound up with the creation of man in the image of God.

—John Paul II, Nov. 14, 1979,
“By Communion of Persons, Man Becomes the Image of God”

We must understand that when Scripture had said, “to the image of God He created him,” it added, “male and female He created them,” not to imply that the image of God came through the distinction of sex, but that the image of God belongs to both sexes, since it is in the mind, wherein there is no sexual distinction.

—St. Thomas Aquinas, I, Q. 93, A. 6, ad 2



¹ See George Weigel, *Witness to Hope: The Biography of Pope John Paul II, 1920-2005* (New York: Harper-Collins, 2005), p. 343: “Angelo Scola, rector of the Pontifical Lateran University in Rome, goes so far as to suggest that virtually every thesis in theology—God, Christ, the Trinity, grace, the Church, the sacraments—could be seen in a new light if theologians explored in depth the rich personalism implied in John Paul II’s theology of the body.... These 130 catechetical addresses, taken together, constitute a kind of theological time bomb set to go off, with dramatic consequences, sometime in the third millennium of the Church. When that happens, perhaps in the twenty-first century, the *Theology of the Body* may well be seen as a critical moment not only in Catholic theology, but in the history of modern thought. For 350 years, Western philosophy has insisted on beginning with the human subject, the thinking subject. Karol Wojtyla, philosopher, took this ‘turn to the subject’ seriously; John Paul II has taken it seriously as a theologian. By insisting that the human subject is always an *embodied* subject whose embodiedness is critical to his or her self-understanding and relationship to the world, John Paul took modernity’s ‘anthropological turn’ with utmost seriousness.” The “theology of the body” is indeed becoming the basis of marriage preparation and even catechism classes throughout the United States and Europe, particularly since the death of John Paul II.

² Cf. John Paul II’s *Crossing the Threshold of Hope*, p. 123: “When I was a young priest, I learned to love human love. It was one of the themes on which I based my entire priesthood, my ministry in my preaching, in the confessional and in my writings. If one truly loves human love, one feels the pressing need to give oneself with all one’s strength to the service of the ‘great love.’” The tenets

Man’s excellence consists in the fact that God made him to His own image by giving him an intellectual soul, which raises him above the beasts of the field.

—St. Augustine, *Literal Interpretation of Genesis*, vi. 12

John Paul II’s theology of the body offers a prime illustration of a Vatican II time bomb in the process of detonation.¹ As Archbishop of Krakow, Karol Wojtyla was one of the principal architects of *Gaudium et Spes*; as pope, he devoted 130 General Audiences from 1979 to 1984 to drawing all the potential from the wording he had helped to fashion. Indeed, the entire “catechesis” rests explicitly on the interpretation of Genesis contained in *Gaudium et Spes*, §12, cited in one of the pope’s first audiences, November 14, 1979: “God did not create man as a solitary, for from the beginning ‘male and female he created them.’ Their companionship produces the primary form of interpersonal communion. For by his innermost nature man is a social being, and unless he relates himself to others he can neither live nor develop his potential.”

The system is internally coherent: it represents Fr. Wojtyla’s early preoccupation with constructing an objective moral system inherently compelling to modern man in his subjective experience, not merely imposed by an external magisterium; a system arising from the holistic analysis of the person, not from abstractive Thomistic philosophy.²

The structure and the full implications of the pope’s teaching best appear when contrasted with the traditional theology it was meant to replace. The revolutionary nature of the new system stands out more starkly if we translate the theology of the body into the language of scholasticism, defining their common terms. In so clarifying the expression, we hope to shed light on the philosophical Newspeak built into Vatican II itself, and at the same time demonstrate the vital necessity of Thomistic realism as a scaffolding for theological reflection. Indeed, the pope’s intention was to found an objective system of ethics on the interpersonal relationship between man and woman; his principles and manner of proceeding are so flawed that they effectively demolish all possibility of relationship between man and God.

The Exegetical Starting Point

In his audience of September 5, 1979, the pope began his presentation of the theology of the body with the lesson of Christ to the Pharisees in Matthew 19. Christ points to the “beginning” as the foundation of marriage ethics, and the pope thereafter devotes his audiences to an exegesis of the two accounts of creation, Genesis 1:26-27 and 2:7-25. These provide the founding elements of the theology of the body: first, the notion of man as a person both by his subjectivity and by his relativity, that is, both by his awareness of solitude among the animals and by his entering into a relation of mutual self-giving with Eve; second, the notion that man thus constituted a person is in the image of God.³

The pope himself calls his system a theology “of the body” because

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of the theology of the body are already present in his *Love and Responsibility*, published by the Catholic University of Lublin (KUL) in 1960. The book was itself the result of the courses he developed and taught at the University starting in 1956. Fr. Wojtyła took inspiration from the phenomenology of Max Scheler in particular. Cf. Weigel, *Witness to Hope*, pp. 126-130. The pope likewise points to the importance of his contact with the youth group “Srodowisko,” in *Crossing the Threshold of Hope*, p. 208: “When love is responsible, it is also truly free. This is precisely the teaching I learned from the encyclical *Humanae Vitae* written by my venerable predecessor Paul VI, and that I had learned even earlier from my young friends, married and soon to be married, while I was writing *Love and Responsibility*. As I have said, they themselves were my teachers in this area” (emphasis in the original). The title of his second doctoral thesis at the University of Krakow was “An Evaluation of the Possibility of Constructing a Christian Ethics on the Basis of the System of Max Scheler.” He concluded that Scheler’s phenomenology was rich in potential but needed a grounding in realism to prevent its descent into “solipsism.” The immediate occasion for the presentation of the theology of the body catechesis was a desire to repair damage done by *Humanae Vitae*, which Cardinal Wojtyła considered a pastoral disaster. Cf. Weigel, pp. 207-210, 334-335, and Yves Semen, *La Séxualité selon Jean-Paul II* (Paris: Presses de la Renaissance, 2004), pp. 58-59, and 188-90.

³ Cf. the Audience of Sept. 5, 1979, “The Unity and Indissolubility of Marriage”; Oct. 10, 1979, “The Meaning of Man’s Original Solitude”; Jan. 9, 1980, “The Nuptial Meaning of the Body”; Nov. 14, 1979, “By the Communion of Persons, Man Becomes the Image of God.” Audience names are taken from the Vatican

man’s establishment as a person and as image of God depend on his physical structure. Man’s consciousness that he is alone among the other animals and the fact that he “can only discover his true self in a sincere giving of himself,” depend on his perception of the body: his body first, and then the body of woman.⁴ Likewise by his body is he established as image of God: “Right from the beginning, the theology of the body is bound up with the creation of man in the image of God.”⁵

The Philosophical Starting Point

Whatever the sincerity of the pope’s exegesis, his use of Genesis is a departure from the traditional interpretation on a number of points and seems rather a defense of his own philosophical starting point.

It is striking that man’s creation as a person is gradual and achieved by man’s knowledge and action: “Since it took place at the ‘beginning,’ this [awareness of the female as ‘bone of my bones’] confirms the process of individuation of man in the world.”⁶ For St. Thomas, such a “confirmation of the process of individuation” is meaningless: an individual man exists once a particular matter is animated by a human soul. Personhood is inseparable from man’s individuality: a person is for St. Thomas “an individual substance of a rational nature.” Thus, in traditional philosophy, a man is a person ontologically, by the structure of his being; he is not a person gradually, in the development of his mature actions.

Why would the pope abandon the traditional notions of being and the structure of reality? Because he does not think we can know them as surely as St. Thomas claims we do—at least, not surely enough to make of them the basis of a moral system compelling to modern man. Those scholastic definitions assume that we can pierce and understand the structure of the concrete beings around us by a process of abstraction and reasoning; that we really do grasp the essence of a thing by a concept drawn from experience; and that we may reason and form conclusions about reality and its structure based on that process.⁷ The pope’s phenomenology, on the contrary, holds that such abstraction is a falsification of reality, which we can only describe by taking into account all of the elements of an experience; the phenomenological method aims at a kind of sympathetic intuition of the essence of a thing rather than at a conceptual grasp of its structure.

Whereas phenomenology would give the same importance to the entire perception and impression, abstraction allows us to discern the constitutive elements of a thing and distinguish between the higher and the lower, discovering an analogy among beings and a hierarchy of causes. Thus, for St. Thomas, the soul is superior to the body—more noble, possessing its act of being and sharing it with the body—such that man is constituted a person by his spiritual nature. The pope, however, specifies in the notes to his Audience of November 14, 1979, that, “In the conception of the oldest books of the Bible, the dualist opposition ‘body-soul’ does not appear. As we have already pointed out, we may rather speak of a complementary combination ‘body-life.’ The body is the expression of the personality of man.”



website.

- ⁴ Jan. 16, 1980, “The Human Person Becomes a Gift in the Freedom of Love.” See also Oct. 24, “Man’s Awareness of Being a Person.”
- ⁵ Audience Nov. 14, 1979, “By the Communion of Persons, Man Becomes the Image of God”: “It becomes, in a way, also the theology of sex, or rather the theology of masculinity and femininity, which has its starting point here in Genesis.... This unity through the body—and the two will be one flesh’ possesses a multiform dimension. It possesses an ethical dimension, as is confirmed by Christ’s answer to the Pharisees in Matthew 19 (cf. *Mk.* 10). It also has a sacramental dimension, a strictly theological one, as is proved by St. Paul’s words to the Ephesians which refer also to the tradition of the prophets (Hosea, Isaiah, Ezekiel). This is so because, right from the beginning, that unity which is realized through the body indicates not only the ‘body,’ but also the ‘incarnate’ communion of persons—*communio personarum*—and calls for this communion.”
- ⁶ Jan. 9, 1980, “The Nuptial Meaning of the Body.” Also significant is the Audience of Sept. 19, 1979, “The Second Account of Creation: The Subjective Creation of Man,” and of Feb. 20, 1980, “Man Enters the World as a Subject of Truth and Love,” which seems to imply that Adam’s sleep eliminates the primacy which flows from his having been created first: “In Genesis 2:23 we come across the distinction ‘is-’issah for the first time. Perhaps, therefore, the analogy of sleep indicates here not so much a passing from consciousness to subconsciousness, as a specific return to non-being (sleep contains an element of annihilation of man’s conscious existence). That is, it indicates a return to the moment preceding the creation, that through God’s creative initiative, solitary ‘man’ may emerge from it again in his double unity as male and female.”

Man: Image or Trace?

This failure to distinguish explicitly the soul and its operations as superior to the body means that the theology of the body redefines the notion of man as “image of God.” Thus, St. Thomas’s statement, citing Augustine, that man is in the image of God by his mind only, has no place in a phenomenological system. The pope must therefore redefine “image of God” into an object of phenomenological study: it is a picture, an external representation of God. Better, it is an experience. The full awareness of the meaning of the body takes place in the mutual “knowing” of man and woman; their physical union becomes a language, expressing the nature of God to the world and to themselves: “This language of the body becomes so to speak a prophecy of the body.”⁸

What the pope calls image, St. Thomas would call a mere trace of God in the material world, the lowest form of likeness. Man is an image or likeness of God because his soul is capable of attaining God by its operation of knowing and loving: “The mind is the image of God, in that it is capable of Him and can be partaker of Him.”⁹

Thus, man is *capax Dei* by his soul, by nature, by “creation” as Augustine says. This openness of nature allows for the entry of grace into his soul, and a new manner of being “to the image of God” by a union of theological virtue: imperfectly, as image of grace, and perfectly, as image of glory.¹⁰ This properly theological union is impossible in a “theology of the body” precisely because the soul is not clearly distinguished as being, by nature, the place of encounter with God. Nor is there possibility of distinction between natural image and image by grace or glory. Man approaches God by purer union with another human; by becoming more fully gift to another, he more fully resembles God. A recovery of the image of God and of the original “innocence of heart” depend on living in marriage as mutual gift.¹¹

Heaven itself and the communion of saints are to be understood in function of this mutual giving.¹² In the pope’s “theology,” there is no room for heaven as the satisfaction of the soul’s infinite longing: “Happiness is the perfect good, which lulls the appetite altogether.... Now the object of the will, that is, of man’s appetite, is the universal good; just as the object of the intellect is the universal true. Hence it is evident that naught can lull man’s will, save the universal good.... Wherefore God alone can satisfy the will of man.”¹³

The Death of Religion

This brief presentation can only give some hint of the doctrinal, spiritual and cultural ravages contained in the theology of the body. The mechanism of this time bomb is therefore nuclear; it is devastating in its effects because it acts on the very core of theology, replacing the meaning of the philosophical terms it uses. The structure of every notion is modified, but so is the order of the whole: God ceases to be the final cause, the end of all being and action, that around which all revolves, because man was

Theme A Catholic Primer on Art

⁷ See for example *Quaestiones Disputatae de Anima*, a. 14.

⁸ Aug. 22, 1984. See also Feb. 20, 1980 and Nov. 14, 1979.

⁹ Ia, q. 93, a. 6. See also St. Augustine's *De Trinitate*, bk. 14, ch. 8 and ch. 12.

¹⁰ Ia, q. 93, a. 4.

¹¹ April 2, 1980, "Marriage in the Integral Vision of Man": "Those who seek the accomplishment of their own human and Christian vocation in marriage are called, first of all, to make this theology of the body... the content of their life and behavior." See the commentary by Weigel, *Witness to Hope*, Ch. 10, "The Ways of Freedom," segment entitled "Marital intimacy as an icon of the interior life of God," p. 326 ff.

¹² Dec. 16, 1981, "The Words of Christ Concerning the Resurrection Complete the Revelation of the Body": "This reality [of the world to come] signifies the true and definitive fulfillment of human subjectivity and, at the same time, the definitive fulfillment of the 'nuptial' meaning of the body" (translation our own).

¹³ Ia-IIae, q. 2, a. 8.

¹⁴ Nov. 14, 1979, "By the Communion of Persons Man Becomes an Image of God." See also the commentary by Weigel in *Witness to Hope*, ch. 10, "The Ways of Freedom," segment entitled, "Marital intimacy as an icon of the interior life of God," p. 326 ff.

¹⁵ Gal. 5:24, 25.

created as a "particular value for himself,"¹⁴ whom *Gaudium et Spes* calls "the only creature on earth which God willed for itself." This, ultimately, is the "anthropological turn," the revolution which John Paul II took with "utmost seriousness."

The origin of the confusion is a refusal to accept the abstractive realism of St. Thomas: if we have no way of attaining the structure of the real, we have no way of discerning the soul—no way, therefore, of affirming in what way man may be united to God. Willed for himself, man remains alone with himself; deprived of a spiritual soul distinct from their bodies, man and woman cannot meet as equal images of God; taught to seek innocence by plunging himself more fully into the flesh, shall man ever "live in the Spirit" and "walk in the Spirit," having "crucified his flesh"?¹⁵

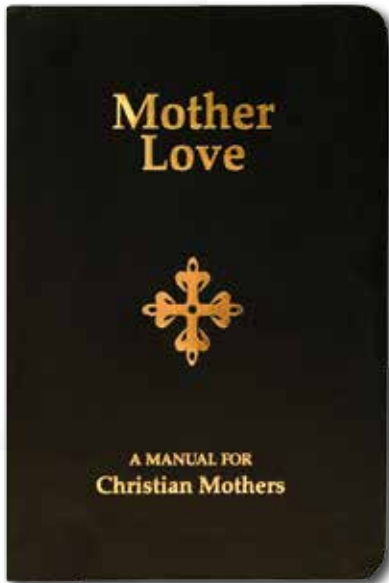
Sanguis Christi, germinans virgines, salva nos.



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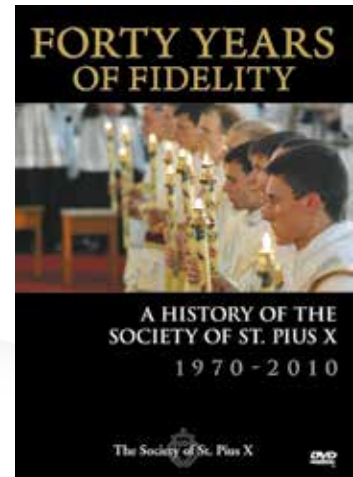
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Stairway to Heaven

by John Rao, Ph.D.

My students regularly accuse me of inventing stories regarding things that happen to me in order to startle and shock them out of their normal state of intellectual and spiritual slumber. Actually, I encounter the same “stuff of life” every day that they do, but somehow manage to get something out of it that eludes them. The difference is due to a complex of factors, among which exposure to the message of Baroque art and architecture plays a significant role. And in fairness to my students, that message only became “real” to me when I was twenty-two years old and saw and experienced in person what it had to say.

This happened during the first of what were to prove to be over one hundred glorious trips to Rome. It was late summer, I was at the beginning of my graduate studies, and I needed

to clarify some initial questions regarding a possible dissertation topic at the office of *La Civiltà Cattolica*, which was not that far from the Spanish Steps. Since there was no particular holiday in the offing, the city was uncharacteristically empty—although all too characteristically hot and humid. With the library shut from lunchtime until quite late in the day, I developed the habit of wandering at random after having had a bite to eat. Since I did not yet know Rome at all well, that meant that I often found myself utterly lost.

Lift up the Spirit

Trapped one particularly sultry afternoon in a welter of medieval streets, and eager to

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locate some cover from the sun and quench my ripening thirst, I was rapidly losing all my interest in tourism. No café offered shelter and grog. As narrow lanes led to tinier passageways and then through what appeared to be nothing more than escape-tunnel size cracks between the walls of citadel-like palaces, my frustration grew apace. Finally, when all hope seemed lost, lo and behold, there I was—luxuriating in a magnificent Baroque piazza, equipped with refreshing fountains, watering holes, and stunning architecture, sculpture, and painting, both religious and secular.

What dawned on me, and was then confirmed and sharpened by reading the commentaries of art historians, was that the architects and artists who had conceived that piazza, whose whole complex lifted up the spirit while nevertheless offering all that the body could wish, were extraordinary psychologists as well as builders. Having taken stock of the area surrounding their project, and having rightly judged that those caught in its mesh of little lanes might indeed feel miserably confined by them—its regular inhabitants perhaps even more than the passing tourist—they decided to teach all these myopic grumblers an eye-opening lesson. They resolved to show them that just beyond yet another “dead end,” a seemingly meaningless, frustrating, convoluted path to nowhere could suddenly and surprisingly open up onto the splendor of a Piazza Navona. And perhaps they hoped that such a pleasurable surprise would then lead these frustrated but now bedazzled souls to realize that “much more than meets the eye” might lie in store for them elsewhere; that there might well be “surprises” to be found *everywhere* in this earthly valley of tears; maybe even *inside* the drab alleys giving way to the piazza themselves.

In any case, I spent the rest of my free time, both in Rome as well as in those parts of Europe that I visited on my way up to Oxford for the start of the university year, looking for other examples of Baroque encouragement of the hunt for “more than meets the eye” and the “surprises” hiding behind the drab or frustrating surface of ordinary daily experiences. This did not prove to be a difficult task at all.

Explore the Baroque Message

Such encouragement could be found on the façades and ceilings of many palaces and churches, whose bare construction materials were shown to be mere springboards for whimsical artistic elaborations giving the impression that even the simplest functional building block might be transformed into a sugar cake with icing on top. It was visible at the incomparably beautiful Borromeo Palace on the Isola Bella near Stresa in northern Italy, where rooms of spectacular fancy and brilliance emerged from the stones and grottos of Lago Maggiore, revealing the true vitality that could be drawn from their *unnaturally* frozen “natural” exteriors. And it was palpable at Oxford, my home for the next four years, which was replete with dark little lanes “headed nowhere” that unceasingly guided the pilgrim who gave himself up to their secrets from one enchanted courtyard or piazza to another.

Such exploration of the Baroque message made it clear that the call to expect and discover “more than meets the eye” in the “stuff” of daily existence was also a summons to an awareness of life’s constant movement and dramatic character. This explains why visitors praying before an altar at a Baroque side chapel and glancing upward to their right or left can often find themselves face to face with a gallery populated by sculpted figures—probably the patrons of this sacred niche—several of them plunging their arms into the walls to embrace invisible guests arriving from somewhere outside to swell their number, and others leaning over the balcony’s edge, gesticulating enthusiastically and urging passersby to join them in their urgent and fervent worship. Visiting faithful may thus well be given the impression that they must all “get on with the dramatic action” and make sure that their beginning act of worship, now in full swing, be brought to a successful conclusion. What were the inhabitants of the gallery praying for, they might ask? Whatever it could be, it would seem to be important to them, perhaps deadly important, and so crucial as to require enlistment of the aid of others in their supplications to obtain.



Finally, investigation of this effort to awaken those “with eyes to see” to the “surprises” to be found everywhere around them indicated just how much Baroque success in illuminating all the nooks and crannies of a movement and drama-filled nature was tied to commitment to the supernatural message coming from the Father of Lights and grasp of the goal of His glorious Creation. This commitment, associated with the work of the Catholic Reformation in general and the Society of Jesus in particular, allowed Baroque artists and artisans to mobilize all natural tools with full respect for the proper “hierarchy of values,” and use them to create an entire world dedicated *ad maiorem Dei gloriam*.

Aesthetic Genius

Sometimes the aesthetic geniuses engaged in this enterprise showed their respect for the primary role of the supernatural in understanding nature’s real character and capabilities by playing with the camera image of persons and objects, twisting, turning, and exaggerating their physical aspects for the purpose of revealing the vital spiritual energy giving ultimate meaningful direction to their action. Sometimes, as with Bernini in his depiction of the mystical experiences of St. Theresa of Avila, they can leave the physical aspects of nature startlingly untouched, while driving home the teaching that one can only understand what the senses tell us all too strongly by interpreting what earthly experiences *really* mean with our eyes focused upwards, on just exactly how God sees them. But whatever their approach, Baroque painters, sculptures, architects, and city planners, working under the twin impulses of Revelation and Grace, brought together all the tools of nature to construct of it one magnificent stairway to heaven.

The Baroque spirit did not appear *ex nihilo*. Its love of nature and its depiction of movement in nature were stirred, to a large degree, by the preceding work of the classicizing Renaissance. At its best, however, it developed classical achievements still further through its own

passionate insights, reintroducing elements into the construction of the stairway to heaven that would also have been familiar to Byzantine and Romanesque and Gothic artists.

Reaction to Despair

But Baroque art was also very much a reaction to the despair of the late Middle Ages regarding the real possibility of “transformation in Christ.” This despair, growing since the 1200’s under the impact of Church-State battles, the Avignon Papacy, the Plague, the Great Western Schism, the collapse of the Crusading Movement, and the crimes of Renaissance churchmen, was given voice, theologically, by Martin Luther, Ulrich Zwingli, and Jean Calvin in the supposedly Bible-based doctrine of the total depravity of man and the universe after Adam’s sin. The logic of this doctrine, as Joseph de Maistre later lamented, was to kill the transforming strength of the *Word* in the name of bare and badly interpreted *words*. But Baroque art and architecture, along with the Catholic Reformation and the Society of Jesus working in union with them, raised their mighty swords in the defense of Grace and Nature, giving the project of constructing the stairway to heaven the long-term contract that it needed.

In practice, most Protestants could not bring themselves to draw all of the drab conclusions their fundamental principle clearly dictated. They could not destroy within them entirely the longing for beauty. Nevertheless, their attacks on the very concept of Holy Church and their fear of doctrinal disputes revealing their inner contradictions forced them to give control over the guidance of art and architecture (and everything else as well) to State and secular forces. These then enlisted the tempting Baroque spirit in the task of adulating princes and potentates on the one hand, and playful earthly passions on the other.

Even under such circumstances, that spirit’s innate strength allowed for the creation of some fine works of art. But as the proper fuel propelling Baroque vitality ran out, and political authorities and private patrons lost any feel >

for where to go to mine it, this degenerated into productions of grandiose pomposity and pretentious or precious silliness. *Corruptio optima pessima!* Hence, blessed Italy got the *Via della Conciliazione*, with its destruction of the narrow streets leading to the “grand surprise” of St. Peter’s Square, and the hideous “wedding cake” of the Altar of the Fatherland at the *Piazza Venezia*. And the United States got Baroque banqueting halls for the churning out of overly expensive and tasteless marriage feasts.

Still, there were all too many logically minded men and women influenced by the Protestant doctrine of total depravity determined to reveal nature for what it “truly” was—namely, a wretched jungle dominated by the war of all against all. Its naturalist and functionalist offspring, through all their aesthetic forms, literature included, have relentlessly sought to produce painting, sculpture, architecture, and whole cities that present no “surprises,” nothing “more than meets the eye,” and definitely no illumination coming down from the Father of Lights concerning Creation’s ultimate meaning and destiny. Not only do they do this directly, but also indirectly, seeking to “destroy what other men cherish” by placing their specific interpretations of nature as a sinful, meaningless jungle in immediate proximity to great Catholic works of art and architecture in order to mock and undermine their influence on people. If there is any holistic meaning to their project at all, it is to make of our entire environment a trapdoor to Hell.

Stairway to Heaven

Yes, the truly productive Catholic Baroque spirit fought mightily on behalf of construction of an alternative stairway to heaven in the City of Man. Nevertheless, individual Catholic princes and rich private individuals with passionate whimsies admittedly did their part to cheapening its vital energy alongside their Protestant brethren. Worse still, Jansenists and their ever increasing number of allies in the eighteenth century so successfully fought against the

concept of transformation of all things in Christ in a world that they deemed much too steeped in sin to be saved that they practically crushed its influence within the Church herself by the time of the Revolution. In the name of fighting a “Baroque Catholicism” that was actually Catholicism pure and simple, and in the cause of producing a cultural climate shaped by what they called “noble simplicity,” all they did was hasten the victory of that naturalism and functionalism that equates Creation with Hell—inside the Church as well as without.

All this brings me full circle. The Baroque first revealed its deeper meaning to me in Rome while I was trying to determine what it is that I should work on for my doctoral dissertation. The dissertation that I chose involved the Catholic Revival Movement of the nineteenth century. It was that Revival Movement that rediscovered the pre-revolutionary, pre-naturalist world in which Catholics were building out of their environment a stairway to heaven based upon the doctrine of the Mystical Body of Christ and transformation of all things under His Kingship. It was that Revival Movement that showed me just how correct the Baroque spirit was in looking for the surprising hand of God in everything in life, small and insignificant as it first might seem. It was that Revival Movement that told me that if I did not seek to make of my environment a stairway to heaven with every single tool at my disposal—with what could be seen and experienced by people at the top of the list—then those who wished it to be a trapdoor to hell would do with it what they wished. And this makes my stories to my students an aesthetic and artistic act in their own right—one designed as an act of worship to my God and a weapon in my defense and the defense of my fellow Catholics.

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A Vindication of the

American Dream

by Fr. Dominique Bourmaud, SSPX

A Debate on Tolerance and Religious Liberty

The previous article on “The Two Swords” [*The Angelus*, Jan.-Feb. 2013] expounded the social doctrine on the relations of Church and State in the ideal circumstance of a Catholic State: this is when there is harmony between the two powers working towards a common good. Added to this is another principle which regards those cases where the Catholic faith is not that of the great majority of the citizens. This is called the principle of tolerance, and it is also an essential element of Church doctrine.

After a brief exposition of the question, we shall bring out the two groups involved in the dispute, before concluding with the results reached at Vatican II.

Magisterium on Tolerance

“The Church, indeed,” Pope Leo XIII in *Immortale Dei* teaches, “deems it unlawful to place the various forms of divine worship on the same footing as the True Religion, but does not, on that account, condemn those rulers who, for the sake of securing some great good or of hindering some great evil, patiently allow custom or usage to be a kind of sanction for each kind of religion having its place in the State.”

In the footsteps of Leo XIII, Pius XII in *Ci Riesce* (Dec. 6, 1953) explains the double aspect of tolerance: error has no right, but for a higher good like the common good of society, it may be tolerated. And in fact, given the international relations between states, it may well be that toleration becomes universal. >

“The two principles are clarified to which recourse must be had in concrete cases....

- First: that which does not correspond to truth or to the norm of morality objectively has no right to exist, to be spread or to be activated.
- Secondly: failure to impede this with civil laws and coercive measures can nevertheless be justified in the interests of a higher and more general good.

“Let Us return now, however, to the two propositions mentioned above: and in the first place to the one which denies unconditionally everything that is religiously false and morally wrong. With regard to this point there never has been, and there is not now, in the Church any vacillation or any compromise, either in theory or in practice. Her deportment has not changed in the course of history, nor can it change whenever or wherever, under the most diversified forms, she is confronted with the choice: either incense for idols or blood for Christ.

“Concerning the second proposition, that is to say, concerning tolerance in determined circumstances, toleration even in cases in which one could proceed to repression, the Church—out of regard for those who in good conscience (though erroneous, but invincibly so) are of different opinion—has been led to act and has acted with that tolerance, after she became the State Church under Constantine the Great and the other Christian emperors, always for higher and more cogent motives.”

Liberty is not an absolute faculty to use at will; it is the faculty to choose what is good, not evil. No man is morally free to choose good or evil, true or false. Error is the evil of the mind, and even though it is not always a sin, it is always evil and damaging for souls. A real right is something objective, based on truth. Applied to religion, no Catholic can defend the “freedom of religious worship” if it means that everyone has a natural, God-given right to accept and to practice whatever form of religion appeals to him individually. The only religion that has a genuine right to exist is the religion that God revealed and made obligatory on all men; hence, man has a natural and God-given freedom to embrace only the one true religion.

The Dynamic Group

For about ten years (1946-56), the United States was the theater of a heated debate which opposed the holders of the “received” doctrine on Church and State, called by their opponents the *static group*, and those who wished for new blood to be infused in the matter, who liked to call themselves the *dynamic group*. Fr. John Courtney Murray, S.J., was teaching theology from 1937 in Woodstock, Maryland, and, in 1941, was named editor of the Jesuit journal *Theological Studies*, and he held both positions long years until his sudden death in 1967.

Murray seemed to stir trouble within the theological world on various grounds. He had misgivings on the doctrine of salvation, when in 1944, he endorsed full co-operation with Christians and theists, raising some eyebrows about dangers to the faith. He turned to questions of how the Church might arrive at new theological doctrines. If Catholics were to arrive at new truths about God, they would have to converse “*on a footing of equality*” with theists.

But Murray’s main effort dealt with the Church and State relation. He contended that every man by right of nature (*jure naturae*) has the right to freedom of religion following his conscience, and therefore, that no state can forbid religious worship simply because it is religious. He also contended that the state was incompetent to judge the true religion or to bring it into the state constitution.

A good summary of his plight was given when his ideas had already taken root in the conciliar aula (*America*, Nov. 30, 1963): “This principle, which asserts the incompetence of secular political authority in the field of religion is deeply embedded in the true political tradition of the Christian West. It is also affirmed with the theological tradition of the Church. Leo XIII for instance made it quite clear that political authority has no part whatsoever in the care of souls, or in the control of the minds of men. It is, of course, true that this political principle was obscured in Europe for centuries, largely in consequence of the rise of royal absolutism and the ‘Union of Throne and Altar.’ The true tradition



was, however, preserved in the American constitutional system. Absolutism never set foot in America, much to the joy both the Church and of the American people...I should like to see this principle asserted in the final conciliar text on religious freedom. It is, I think, essential to the case for religious freedom in society.”

It is interesting to note the reasons he furnished to back up his pet theory. It is because this is the true doctrine of the Church, but also because the Church needs to assume a universal patronage of the dignity of the human person in the age of growing totalitarian tyranny. It is because we are living in the age of the religiously pluralist society, where men of all religions and of no religion must live together under equitable laws that protect the whole range of human right. Finally, and this is perhaps the underlying motive to his effort, it is because we are living in an age in which a great ecumenical hope has been born, and the path to this goal can lie only along the road of freedom—social, civil, political, and religious freedom.

Murray had had some skirmishes with his opponents all the way to Rome in the early 1950s. But what precipitated things was the bold address he gave in March 1954. He suggested that Pope Pius XII’s *Ci Riesce* was largely a refutation of Cardinal Ottaviani’s more conservative interpretation of the Pope on religious liberty. This incident culminated in Murray being silenced the next year, forbidden, under pressure from Rome, to write or publish on the topic. His superior Fr. McCormick told him: “You may write poetry.” Yet he managed to publish His landmark book, *We Hold These Truths: Catholic Reflections on the American Proposition*, which garnered him the *Time* coverage.

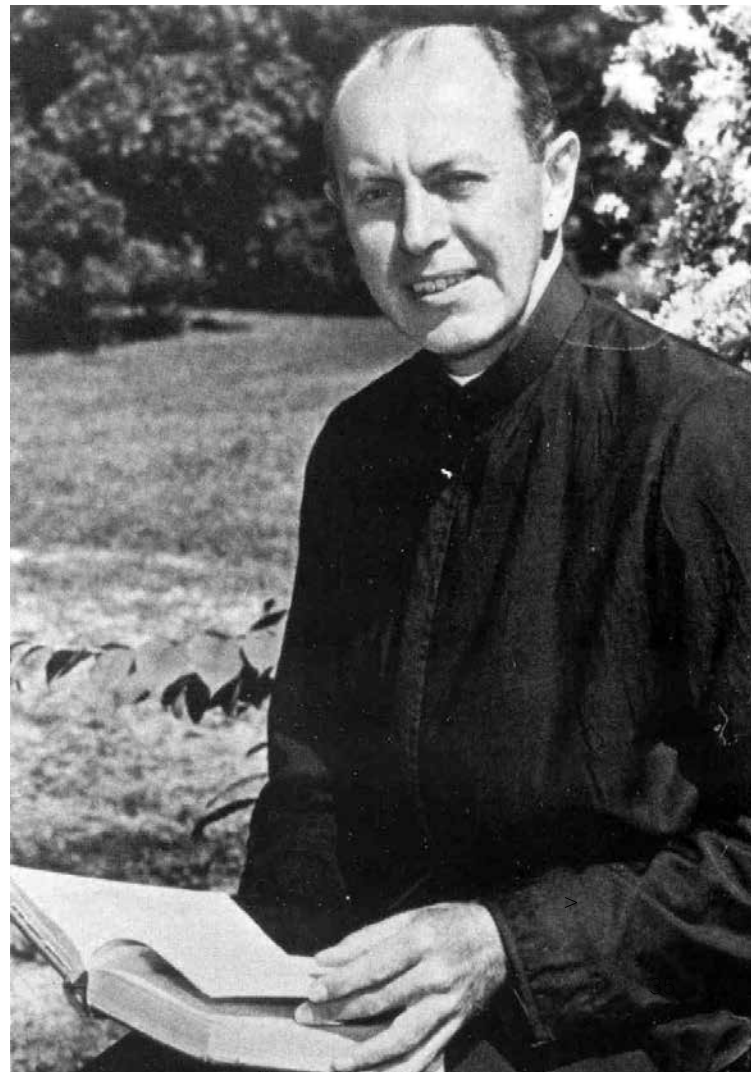
The Tandem Fenton-Ottaviani

Msgr. Joseph Clifford Fenton headed the static group. He was professor of fundamental dogmatic theology at the Catholic University of America for twenty-five years and editor of the *American Ecclesiastical Review* (1943–1963). He had embellished the *Review* with regular articles

critical of Murray’s ideas since 1948. Another of his targets was another Woodstock theologian, Fr. Weigel (AER, May 1953).

Fr. Weigel argued thus against the *statics*: “The dynamic expositors simply cannot understand the final position of the static group. This position is that American Catholics can be loyal to, and satisfied with, the American Constitution, in spite of the fact that there is an objective obligation to go counter to it...Does not such a stand make the Catholic’s situation *most ambiguous to himself* and more so to his non-Catholic fellow Americans? Obviously the principle of tolerating what cannot be remedied is a >

John Courtney Murray, (Sept. 12, 1904 – Aug. 16, 1967), was an American Jesuit priest and theologian who was especially known for his efforts to reconcile Catholicism and religious pluralism, particularly focusing on the relationship between religious freedom and the institutions of a democratically structured modern state. During the Second Vatican Council, he played a key role in persuading the assembly of the Catholic bishops to adopt the Council’s ground-breaking Declaration on Religious Liberty, *Dignitatis Humanae*.



sound one, but even toleration in the face of an objective obligation must do everything possible to correct the condition... Could the American Catholic who *de facto* feels no conflict between his religion and his Constitution *be intelligently honest with himself*? Do not the static expositors agree fundamentally with the claim of some that *there is a chasm separating Catholicism and American democracy*?”

Fr. Fenton explained to his readers that this was really getting old hat. Already, back in 1946 (*sic*), *Time* magazine had made a similar false accusation about our Catholic teaching: “Nothing about Catholicism so confuses—and often dismays—U.S. Protestants as the stand of the Church on freedom of worship. Does Catholicism support the first article of the Bill of Rights? In U.S. practice, yes; in principle, no.”

It seems thus that the opponents of the Catholic principles misconstrued and caricatured the true position so as to better attack it, but they were having a go at a straw man, and not at the Catholic position. Here are some rebuttals made by Fenton.

The attacks of *Time* magazine were directed at the article “Freedom of Worship” by Fr. Connell, Fenton’s associate at C.U. But Fr. Connell never said that religious toleration was an anti-Catholic principle. On the contrary, he echoed *Ci Riesce*: “Indeed, a Catholic would not be inconsistent with any principle of his faith if he held that in the circumstances that prevail at the present time, it would be the most feasible plan to have complete religious toleration throughout the whole world. But it must ever be remembered that a Catholic cannot advocate such a plan on the basis that all religions have a genuine, God-given right to exist. Such a right belongs only to the one religion founded by Jesus Christ for all men.”

“It would seem, that the side of the controversy to which Fr. Weigel has devoted his sympathies and his efforts is in some way more American in tone or in tendency than that defended by Fr. Connell. Actually, nothing could be farther from the truth and nothing could do more harm to the cause of Catholic truth in this country than the naïve acceptance of such a misconception. Truth is not a matter of nationality... Thus when

the validity of the concept of a ‘Catholic state’ was defended and when we argued that a state made of Catholics had a definite obligation, as a social unit, to worship God according to the rites of the true religion... we advanced these theses because and only because they were in line with the declarations of the ecclesiastical magisterium and with the teachings of Scripture and tradition.”

“A lecturer [Murray] gave the appearance (end March 1953) that *Ci Riesce* of Pius XII constituted a repudiation of the teachings of Cardinal Ottaviani on ‘Church and State.’ He contended that since *Ci Riesce*, those who have hitherto accepted the teachings of the Cardinal’s article as true are faced with the obligation of reconsidering their position to avoid coming into opposition with the doctrine of the Pope. This, of course, is an extremely serious charge. It is also utterly baseless and incorrect... What has attracted opposition to Cardinal Ottaviani’s paper may possibly be due to what the Cardinal had to say about the permanent validity of authoritative ecclesiastical doctrine, affirming the identical and constant teaching between Pius XII, Pius XI and Leo XIII.” And Fenton concluded that both documents “gave new support to what is, after all, the standard teaching of Catholic manuals of fundamental dogmatic theology and of public ecclesiastical law.”

At that juncture Cardinal Ottaviani intervened. He wrote the following:

“The controversy recently carried on between two authors of opposite views in a country beyond the Atlantic is widely known. One of the disputants has defended the thesis we have just mentioned and holds:

1. The State, properly speaking, cannot accomplish an act of religion.
2. The State’s obligation to worship God can never enter the Constitutional sphere.
3. Finally, even for a State composed of Catholics, there is no obligation to profess the Catholic religion. With regard to the obligation to protect it, this does not become operative except in determined circumstances and precisely when the liberty of the Church cannot be guaranteed in any other way.



“From such principles spring attacks directed against the teaching set forth in manuals of public ecclesiastical law, no account being taken of the fact that such teaching is based, for the most part, on the doctrine expounded in Pontifical Documents.”

The Liberals Take Over

On the eve of the Council, while working on the preparatory schemas, the most dramatic session took place between Cardinal Ottaviani and Cardinal Bea during the debate on religious toleration with Archbishop Lefebvre as a witness. Ottaviani declined that Bea's commission (of the Secretariat for Christian Unity) had any right to present a second schema on religious liberty since it was a doctrinal matter. It was as if the Pope had made use of Hegelian dialectics in order to arrive at a satisfying result. The Ottaviani schema was called “Relations between Church and State and Religious Tolerance,” comprising fourteen pages of quotes from Pius XI and Pius XII. The Bea text, entitled “On Religious Liberty,” had only five pages of notes with no references to the magisterium of the Church. The Archbishop

concluded that the liberals wanted to introduce Liberalism and the Declaration of the Rights of Man into the Church.

Msgr. Fenton, a *peritus*, or theological expert, at Vatican II fighting on the side of his Roman friend, Cardinal Ottaviani, had gone to Rome convinced there was no way that the Council would propound a “revolution in Catholic attitudes.” On November 11, 1963, there was a crucial meeting between the Roman theologians: Cardinal Ottaviani and Msgr. Fenton on one side, and Cardinal Bea, John Courtney Murray, and Karl Rahner, on the other. A vote was taken at that meeting which secured John Courtney Murray's new teaching on religious liberty as the official position at the Council. This was a position that Fenton understood well, and had consistently fought throughout the entire 1950s.

Msgr. Fenton immediately returned from Rome and resigned as editor of the *American Ecclesiastical Review*, allegedly for health reasons. Yesterday's heresy had become today's orthodoxy, and Msgr. Fenton resigned his post rather than promote a teaching he knew to be incorrect, a teaching which was the glorification of the American dream.

On Dante

A selection from **In Praeclara Summorum**, encyclical of Pope Benedict XV

To Professors and Students of Literature and Learning in the Catholic World.

Among the many celebrated geniuses of whom the Catholic faith can boast who have left undying fruits in literature and art especially, besides other fields of learning, and to whom civilization and religion are ever in debt, highest stands the name of Dante Alighieri, the sixth centenary of whose death will soon be recorded. Never perhaps has his supreme position been recognized as it is today. Not only Italy, justly proud of having given him birth, but all the civil nations are preparing with special committees of learned men to celebrate his memory that the whole world may pay honour to that noble figure, pride and glory of humanity.

Profess Catholic Religion

4. And first of all, inasmuch as the divine poet throughout his whole life professed in exemplary manner the Catholic religion, he would surely desire that this solemn commemoration should take place, as indeed will be the case, under the auspices of religion, and if it is carried out in San Francesco in Ravenna it should begin in San Giovanni in Florence to which his thoughts turned during the last years of his life with the desire of being crowned poet at the very font where he had received Baptism. Dante lived in an age which inherited the most glorious fruits of philosophical and theological teaching and thought, and handed them on to the succeeding ages with the imprint of the strict scholastic



method. Amid the various currents of thought diffused then too among learned men Dante ranged himself as disciple of that Prince of the school so distinguished for angelic temper of intellect, Saint Thomas Aquinas. From him he gained nearly all his philosophical and theological knowledge, and while he did not neglect any branch of human learning, at the same time he drank deeply at the fountains of Sacred Scripture and the Fathers. Thus he learned almost all that could be known in his time, and nourished specially by Christian knowledge, it was on that field of religion he drew when he set himself to treat in verse of things so vast and deep. So that while we admire the greatness and keenness of his genius, we have to recognize, too, the measure in which he drew inspiration from the Divine Faith by means of which he could beautify his immortal poems with all the lights of revealed truths as well as with the splendours of art. Indeed, his *Commedia*, which deservedly earned the title of *Divina*, while it uses various symbolic images and records the lives of mortals on earth, has for its true aim the glorification of the justice and providence of God who rules the world through time and all eternity and punishes and rewards the actions of individuals and human society. It is thus that, according to the Divine Revelation, in this poem shines out the majesty of God One and Three, the Redemption of the human race operated by the Word of God made Man, the supreme loving-kindness and charity of Mary, Virgin and Mother, Queen of Heaven, and lastly the glory on high of Angels, Saints and men; then the terrible contrast to this, the pains of the impious in Hell; then the middle world, so to speak, between Heaven and Hell, Purgatory, the Ladder of souls destined after expiation to supreme beatitude. It is indeed marvellous how he was able to weave into all three poems these three dogmas with truly wrought design. If the progress of science showed later that that conception of the world rested on no sure foundation, that the spheres imagined by our ancestors did not exist, that nature, the number and course of the planets and stars, are not indeed as they were then thought to be, still the fundamental principle remained that

the universe, whatever be the order that sustains it in its parts, is the work of the creating and preserving sign of Omnipotent God, who moves and governs all, and whose glory *risplende in una parte piu e meno altrove*; and though this earth on which we live may not be the centre of the universe as at one time was thought, it was the scene of the original happiness of our first ancestors, witness of their unhappy fall, as too of the Redemption of mankind through the Passion and Death of Jesus Christ. Therefore the divine poet depicted the triple life of souls as he imagined it in such a way as to illuminate with the light of the true doctrine of the faith the condemnation of the impious, the purgation of the good spirits and the eternal happiness of the blessed before the final judgment.

Reverence to Holy Scripture

5. But among the truths that shine out in the triple poem of Alighieri as in his other works We think that these things may serve as teaching for men of our times. That Christians should pay highest reverence to the Sacred Scripture and accept what it contains with perfect docility he proclaims when he says that “Though many are the writers of the Divine Word nevertheless there is but one Dictator, God, Who has deigned to show us His goodwill through the pens of many” (*Mon.*, III, 4). Glorious expression of a great truth. Again, when he says that “The Old and the New Testament, prescribed for eternity, as the Prophet says, contain ‘spiritual teachings transcending human reason,’ given ‘by the Holy Ghost who by means of the Prophets and sacred writings, through Jesus Christ co-eternal Son of God and through His disciples revealed the supernatural truth necessary for us” (*Mon.*, III, 3, 16). And therefore regarding the life to come “It is assured by the true doctrine of Christ who is the Way, the Truth and the Life: the Way because by that way we advance without hindrance to the happiness of that immortality; the Truth because He is free from all error; the Light because He enlightens us in the darkness of ignorance of this world” (*Conv.* II, 9). And no less reverence he pays to >

“those venerable Great Councils the presence of Christ in which no one of the faithful doubts”; and great is his esteem for “writings of the Doctors, Augustine and the others, and if any one doubt that they were aided by the Holy Ghost either he has not seen their fruits or if he has seen he has not tasted” (*Mon.*, III, 3).

Intellectual Enjoyment

8. Wonderful, therefore, is the intellectual enjoyment that we gain from the study of the great poet, and no less the profit for the student making more perfect his artistic taste and more keen his zeal for virtue, as long as he keeps his mind free from prejudice and open to accept truth. Indeed, while there is no lack of great Catholic poets who combine the useful with the enjoyable, Dante has the singular merit that while he fascinates the reader with wonderful variety of pictures, with marvellously lifelike colouring, with supreme expression and thought, he draws him also to the love of Christian knowledge, and all know how he said openly that he composed his poem to bring to all “vital nourishment.” And we know now too how, through God’s grace, even in recent times, many who were far from, though not averse to Jesus Christ, and studied with affection the *Divina Commedia*, began by admiring the truths of the Catholic Faith and finished by throwing themselves with enthusiasm into the arms of the Church.

9. What We have said above suffices to show how opportune it is that on the occasion of this world centenary each should intensify his zeal for the preservation of that Faith shown by Dante pre-eminently as support of learning and the arts. For We admire in him not only supreme height of genius but also the immensity of the subject which holy religion put to his hand. If his genius was refined by meditation and long study of the great classics it was tempered even more gloriously, as We have said, by the writings of the Doctors and the Fathers which gave him the wings on which to rise to a higher atmosphere than that of restricted nature. And thus it comes that, though he is separated from us by centuries,

he has still the freshness of a poet of our times: certainly more modern than some of those of recent days who have exhumed the Paganism banished forever by Christ’s triumph on the Cross. There breathes in Alighieri the piety that we too feel; the Faith has the same meaning for us; it is covered with the same veil, “the truth given to us from on high, by which we are lifted so high.” That is his great glory, to be the Christian poet, to have sung with Divine accents those Christian ideals which he so passionately loved in all the splendour of their beauty, feeling them intimately and making them his life. Such as dare to deny to Dante this award and reduce all the religious content of the *Divina Commedia* to a vague ideology without basis of truth fail to see the real characteristic of the poet, the foundation of all his other merits.

10. If then Dante owes so great part of his fame and greatness to the Catholic Faith, let that one example, to say nothing of others, suffice to show the falseness of the assertion that obedience of mind and heart to God is a hindrance to genius, whereas indeed it incites and elevates it. Let it show also the harm done to the cause of learning and civilization by such as desire to banish all idea of religion from public instruction. Deplorable indeed is the system prevalent today of educating young students as if God did not exist and without the least reference to the supernatural. In some places the “sacred poem” is not kept outside the schools, is indeed numbered among the books to be studied specially; but it does not bring to the young students that “vital nourishment” which it should do because through the principle of the “lay school” they are not disposed towards the truths of the Faith as they should be. Heaven grant that this may be the fruit of the Dante Centenary: that wherever literary instruction is given the great poet may be held in due honour and that he himself may be for the pupils the teacher of Christian doctrine, he whose one purpose in his poem was “to raise mortals from the state of misery,” that is from the state of sin, “and lead them to the state of happiness,” that is of divine grace (*Epist.* III, para. 15).



The Spirit of Eastertide

by Fr. Jordan Fahnstock, SSPX

March and April are months central to the Paschal cycle which comprises several sections: the time of Septuagesima, Lent, Easter, Ascension, and Pentecost. After the forty days of the tithes each Christian offers God come the fifty days of the Paschal time called Eastertide. As we concentrate on the latter, we wish to grasp its leitmotiv, and then concentrate more specifically on the Easter celebration itself and some of its popular customs.

The Eastertide

God willed that the Christian Easter and Pentecost should be prepared by the Mosaic Law, fifteen hundred years before the fact, and this reality is our own heritage. During these days,

what is placed before our eyes are two great manifestations of God's benefits to man: the Pasch of Israel and the Christian Pasch; the Pentecost of Sinai and the Pentecost of the Church.

What is the meaning of the Pasch? To the Hebrews, the *Pesach* or Passover referred to the passing of the exterminating angel who spared the Hebrew families protected by the blood of lambs spread on the door posts, just before they would flee towards liberty and the Promised Land.

For the Christians, eternity is the true Pasch. The human race was dead, victim of the sentence passed on Adam, condemned to lie mere dust in the tomb; the gates of life shut against it. But the Son of God rises from His grave and takes possession of eternal life. And He is not the only one: "He is the first-born from the dead," says St. Paul. In the Church's eyes, we have already >

Faith and Morals

risen with our Jesus, and already possess eternal life. That is why we sing the Alleluia, with which the streets and squares of the celestial Jerusalem resound endlessly. After going through Lent, as we have resolved to die no more that death which kills the soul, we are entitled to sing our Alleluia.

Eternity is the true Pasch and it needs be celebrated on Sunday, the first day of the week. The Synagogue by God's command kept holy the Saturday in honor of God's resting after the six days of creation. The Church honors Christ's work. Early on the eighth day, He rises to life and the life is one of glory. Abbot Rupert explains: "Rightly was the seventh (day) changed into the eighth, because we Christians put our joy in a better work than the creation of the world... Let the lovers of the world keep a Sabbath for its creation: but our joy is in the salvation of the world, for our life, yea and our rest, is hidden with Christ in God."



The mystery of the seventh followed by an eighth day, as the holy one, is again brought up front by the number of weeks which form Eastertide. These weeks are seven; they form a week of weeks, and their next day is again a Sunday, the feast of Pentecost. St. Hilary explains it thus: "If we multiply seven by seven, we shall find that this holy season is truly the Sabbath of sabbaths; but what completes it, and raises it to the plenitude of the Gospel, is the eighth day which follows, eighth and first both together in itself."

Said otherwise, after the seven ages of the Church militant there will come the eternal day of the Church triumphant.

If Lent leads us through the *Purgative Life*, Eastertide is referred to as the *Illuminative Life*. It reveals to us the grandest Mystery of the Man-God, the risen Christ, but also the three admirable manifestations of divine love and power, the Resurrection, the Ascension and the Descent of the Holy Ghost. Easter is truly the perfection of the work of Redemption. Here Christ is expressing in His own sacred Humanity the highest degree of the creature's transformation into his God. And with the coming of the Holy Ghost adding up brightness and intimacy, there result those several Christian exercises which produce within the soul an imitation of her divine Model and prepare her for that *Unitive Life* to which her Redeemer invited her.

The Easter Celebration

The feast of the Resurrection is exalted above all other feasts. The saints and Church Fathers refer to it as the "peak (*akropolis*) of all feasts," surpassing "all others like the sun among stars."

The Church used a pious artifice to infuse of the spirit of Easter into all, including '*carnal minds*.' Abbot Rupert explains: "It happens that while the body is being mortified, and is to continue to be so till Easter Night, that holy night is eagerly looked forward to even by the carnal-minded; they long for it to come; and meanwhile, they carefully count each of the forty days, as a wearied traveler does the miles. Thus the sacred solemnity is sweet to all, and dear to all, and desired by all, as light is to them that walk in darkness, as a fount of living water is to them that thirst, and as 'a tent which the Lord hath pitched' for wearied wayfarers."

The English term *Easter* and the German *Ostern* come from a common origin, which to the Norsemen meant the season of the rising and growing sun, the season of new birth. The same root is found in the name for the place where the sun rises, East, *Ost*. It meant originally the celebration of the spring sun, which had its birth in the East and brought new life upon earth. This



symbolism was transferred to the supernatural meaning of our Easter, to the new life of the Risen Christ, the eternal and uncreated Light.

Since there is an intimate bond between the Resurrection of Christ and the sacrament of baptism, the Church united these two 'resurrections' in a common ritual. It celebrates the 'new life' not only of Christ as the Head, but also of His Mystical Body. This is why the prayers of the liturgy in the Paschal week constantly reflect those two thoughts: the Resurrection of Our Lord and the baptism of the faithful.

The rising of Christ is symbolized particularly with the Paschal candle, lit from the Easter fire, originally a pagan Germanic tradition of setting big bonfires at the beginning of spring. The celebration of light gave rise to many poems, the most known being *Inventor Rutilis* of Prudentius in 405:

Eternal God, O Lord of Light,
Who hast created day and night:
The sun has set, and shadows deep
Now over land and waters creep;
But darkness must not reign today:
Grant us the light of Christ, we pray.

With the procession of the Easter candle came the Easter Song or *Exultet*, followed by long passages of the Bible called the "prophecies," finishing the formation of the catechumens. Towards midnight, the bishop and clergy went in procession to the baptismal font, originally a large basin built in a round or octagonal structure outside the Church. There they were formally baptized into the "life-giving waters." It is in relation to this that the Church today offers all the faithful present the chance to renew their baptismal vows. Long after midnight, the vigil was concluded with the customary prayers of the litanies and celebration of the Holy Sacrifice.

Easter Customs

The Easter greetings are still quite common in the Greek Church: "*Christos aneste*"—Christ is risen—with the answer "*Alethos aneste*"—He is risen truly. So do the Russians "*Christos voskres. Vo istinu voskres.*" The Poles offer a wish "*Wesołego Alleluia*"—a joyful alleluia to you!

Among the hymns to celebrate the feast, most famous is the *Alleluia! O Filii et Filiae*, by the Franciscan Jean Tisserand in 1494. The *Regina Caeli Laetare* is a 14th-century poem, sung during the entire Eastertide, which serves also as the substitute to the thrice daily Angelus. Handel's oratorio of the *Messiah* offers the *Hallelujah Chorus* during which all audiences rise from their seats. Goethe in his *Faust* of 1832 offers us a brief and forceful Easter song.

Christ is arisen:
Joy to all mortals
Freed from the threatening
Creeping and deadening
Serpents of evil.

The providence of God has harmonized the visible with the supernatural work of grace by designing that the Resurrection of Christ take place during the season where Nature herself seems to rise from the grave. This is symbolized in food. The Easter egg among Indo-European races is the symbol of fertility. To pagans, it was a most startling event to see a new and live creature emerge from a seemingly dead object. In Christian terms, the egg becomes a symbol of the rock tomb out of which Christ emerged to the new life of His resurrection. Moreover, the egg, formerly forbidden all along Lent, gave significance to the Easter joy.

The Easter bunny has its origin in pagan fertility lore. Hare and rabbit were the most fertile animals pagans knew, serving as symbol of abundant new life in spring. This has never been a Christian thing. Yet, the bunny has acquired a cherished role in Easter as the legendary producer of Easter eggs for children in many countries. In Germany, the Easter bunny was believed to lay red eggs on Maundy Thursday and eggs of other colors the night before Easter Sunday. They are a favorite Easter pastry in Northern Europe.

We shall close this folkloric tour with sweet things. In Hungary and thereabout, people bake their ham (the pig is a symbol of abundance and an Easter favorite) with bread dough. The bread of the Slavs is called *Paska*. The German and Austrian oblong or twisted bread with raisins is called *Osterstollen*. The Poles' favorite is the *mazurki* filled with nuts and fruit.



Art and the Spiritual Life

by Fr. Jonathan Loop, SSPX

¹ III Kings 8:10-11.

² Ps. 92:5.

³ I Cor. 3:16-7.

In the Old Testament, God Almighty directed Solomon, the son of David, to build in His honor a glorious temple which would serve as His abode among the Jewish nation. When this house of God had been completed after seven years of construction, we are told: “A cloud filled the house of the Lord and the priests could not minister because of the cloud; for the glory of the Lord had filled the house of the Lord.”¹ For this reason, the Psalmist exclaims: “Holiness becomes thy house, O Lord, unto length of days.”² However, this earthly temple was meant only to serve as an image of the dwelling place of the good God in the New Testament.

The Temple of God Is Holy

In the first of his letters to the Christians at Corinth, St. Paul writes: “Know you not, that you are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? For the temple of God is holy, which you are.”³ In this light, we may better understand the words of Our Lord to the Samaritan woman who had said that the Jews worshipped God in Jerusalem while the



⁴ Jn. 4:21-4.

⁵ On the author's first visit to Europe he travelled Spain. Together with a young Mormon friend, he entered the cathedral of Seville and was floored by the immensity and majesty of the building. As both craned their heads to take in the whole expanse of the interior and to glimpse the ceiling, the normally loquacious teenagers were reduced to expressions of monosyllabic wonder.

⁶ Sermon of March 27, 1975.

Samaritans worshipped Him at Mt. Garizim. He told her, “The hour comes when you shall neither on this mountain or in Jerusalem adore the Father. The hour comes and now is when the true adorers shall adore the Father in spirit and in truth. God is a spirit, and they that adore Him must adore him in spirit and in truth.”⁴ In other words, wherever there is a Christian soul in the state of grace, there we find the temple wherein true worship may be rendered to God Almighty.

Let us take, therefore, a few moments to see how we may be able to render our souls worthy dwelling places of the Creator of heaven and earth. To do so, let us briefly consider some of the qualities that characterize the beautiful cathedrals—Chartres, Notre Dame of Paris, St. Peter’s Basilica in Rome, to name but a few—which were constructed during the Ages of Faith. These churches were designed principally in order to give honor and glory to the good God; everything in them was directed to this purpose. Although many different styles have dominated various periods of church architecture, there are various elements which remain constant over the centuries. Among these, we shall focus on the great order found in Catholic churches, the frequent presence of natural light, and the fact that these buildings were traditionally built from stone.

The Altar Is the Center

As one enters a Catholic cathedral, one cannot but be impressed by the grandeur of the edifice as well as by the harmonious arrangement of everything contained within it.⁵ These two elements contribute to the sense of order which pervades the temples of our religion. Of course, if we speak of order, we necessarily imply something which both establishes and defines that order. In Catholic cathedrals—and, indeed, even in the most humble parish church—this principle of order is nothing other than the altar. In a sermon, Archbishop Lefebvre asked rhetorically: “The altar is the center of all of our basilicas and our churches, is it not?” He goes on to say, “What do missionaries do in the lands they want to evangelize? The first thing they do is set up a chapel, a place of prayer. And in this place, what do they put in the middle? An altar.”⁶ The whole design of Catholic churches is meant to direct souls to the altar. Why? For there is offered the holy Sacrifice of the Mass, which is the sacrifice of the Cross renewed in an unbloody manner, and there is tendered to God the most perfect act of praise and adoration possible. The beautiful art—the statuary, the stained-glass windows, the vestments and ornaments—as well as the nobility of the majestic proportions of our cathedrals are meant simply to help our minds grasp more perfectly the sublime reality which is effected on these sacred stones.

As it is in our cathedrals and churches, so it ought to be in our souls. Every faculty, every desire, every possession of our soul must be directed to reproducing within us the sacrifice which Our Lord offered on Calvary and continues to offer on our altars. What does this mean for us in practice? To answer this, we must first ask what lies at the heart of Our Lord’s sacrifice. We may truly say that the sacrifice which Our Lord Jesus Christ offered >



on Calvary—and thus which He continues to offer upon our altars—was essentially one of obedience to the will of His Father: “He humbled himself, becoming obedient unto death, even the death of the Cross.”⁷ We may see the final oblation which Our Lord makes in the garden of Gethsemane: “Father, if it be possible, let this chalice pass from me. Nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt.”⁸ Calvary, however, was merely final expression of Christ’s whole life. St. Paul teaches that when Our Lord entered the world, the first movement of His soul was to exclaim: “Sacrifice and oblation thou wouldst not, but a body hast thou fitted for me. Then said I, ‘Behold, I come; in the head of the book it is written of me that I should do thy will.’”⁹ Throughout His public life, He never ceased to repeat, “My meat is to do the will of Him who sent me.”¹⁰ Our greatest passion ought to be to find and to accomplish the will of our Father in heaven. This will invariably mean sacrificing that which is most dear to us—our own will—upon the altar of our hearts. Everything which is in us—our mind, memory, emotions, physical gifts—and even our outward possessions must be ordered to this spiritual altar and the spiritual sacrifice which is offered upon it.

Attention to Our Lord

Another aspect of church architecture reveals to us an additional characteristic of the symbolism inherent in Christian temples. Traditionally, Catholic churches were constructed to face east in order to be directed towards the rising sun. Thus, when Mass was said, the light of the new day would be pouring into the church. Though this evidently serves a practical purpose, it also draws our attention to Our Lord, who is the “light of the world.” In the Gospel according to St. John, Our Lord is recorded to have spoken on this subject on numerous occasions. For example, immediately before His Passion, He explained: “I am come a light into the world; that whosoever believeth in me, may not remain in darkness.”¹¹ In orienting the churches which they built, our ancestors meant in this way to highlight the fact that the Holy Mother Church is illumined by the Sun of Justice.

Here again we may draw a valuable lesson for our spiritual lives. We too must design our spiritual edifice in such a manner as to permit Our Lord to cast His light abundantly within our souls. In the prologue of St. John’s Gospel, we read: “In him was life, and the life was the light of men.”¹² What does this mean? We must study our Faith. What is the Faith if not the truths which Our Lord revealed to us? What are the truths which Our Lord revealed to us if not supernatural lights far brighter than even the brightest natural knowledge of the greatest philosophers? Archbishop Lefebvre used to say that a five-year-old child that knows its catechism understands reality better than the most renowned scholars [who do not know it]. The more we absorb the teachings of God Incarnate, the more He shall dispel from us the darkness of our ignorance and error. He said: “I am the light of the world: he that followeth me, walketh not in darkness, but shall have the light of life.”¹³



Christ Himself the Cornerstone

⁷ Phil. 2:8.

⁸ Lk. 22:42.

⁹ Heb. 10:5, 7.

¹⁰ Jn. 4:34.

¹¹ Jn. 12:42.

¹² Jn. 1:4.

¹³ Jn. 8:12.

¹⁴ I Cor. 3:11.

¹⁵ III Kings 14:25 ff. The temple was despoiled about 30 years after it was completed.

¹⁶ Lk. 23:45.

Finally, it is worthy of note that the building material of choice for the glorious churches of Christendom was invariably stone. In addition to being a strong and noble substance, it has the happy character of recalling to our minds the fact that “Jesus Christ Himself [is] the chief cornerstone” of the Church. He is also the solid foundation of the Church, “For other foundation no man can lay, but that which is laid; which is Christ Jesus.”¹⁴ As it is with the Church, so also in our interior lives. If we are to have a solid and balanced piety, we must base it wholly on Our Lord Jesus Christ as He has made Himself known to us through the public revelation which He has bequeathed to the Church. Indeed, there is no need for a multiplicity of private devotions or pious practices in order to please God. We have only to draw near to Jesus and rest on Him. It is only in this manner that our spiritual lives will have the necessary stability which will enable us to avoid being excessively elated by spiritual consolations or dejected by desolations and trials.

Our spiritual lives will necessarily contain both highs and lows. The glorious temple dedicated by Solomon would be despoiled of its treasures within a few short years¹⁵ and eventually destroyed when the kingdom of Judah was led into the Babylonian captivity. Later, He would both resume His dwelling in the second temple built under the supervision of Nehemias and maintain His presence there until the death of Our Lord Jesus Christ.¹⁶ God will allow the spiritual temple of our souls to suffer a like fate inasmuch as He will permit it—should we faithfully strive to serve Him—to be despoiled of the riches of His consolations. We may even go so far as to say that He will allow it to be destroyed insofar as He works to annihilate anything in it unworthy of Himself. Only in the measure that we have placed Christ as the foundation of our spiritual edifice, ensured that His light bathes its interior, and placed at its center the altar upon which is to be sacrificed our will, shall we be able to endure the constructive work of God in our souls. Then Our Lord and His Eternal Father shall gladly come to take everlasting possession of our souls and fill them with His glory.

Fr. Jonathan Loop was born and raised an Episcopalian. He attended college at the University of Dallas, where he received the grace to convert through the intermediary of several of his fellow students, some of whom later went on to become religious with the Dominicans of Fanjeaux. After graduating with a bachelor's degree in political philosophy, he enrolled in St. Thomas Aquinas Seminary, where he was ordained in June 2011.



A Worthy Bishop

St. Ambrose

by Fr. Emanuel Herkel, SSPX

The Election

The bishop was dead and it was time to choose his successor, but there was no agreement. The cathedral of Milan was noisy. Outside, a crowd was shouting slogans about one God in three Persons and don't give up one iota. Inside, all of the priests and the leading Christians had the right to speak and to vote. It wasn't a very good system, and it was threatening to turn violent. Milan was the capital of northern Italy, where the people were mostly Catholic and loyal to the pope. Many Christians of this diocese, however, were Arian heretics, like the late bishop. Arianism denied that Christ was the eternal God; it had been condemned and was fast disappearing, but Milan had been holding out.

Ambrose, the governor, was concerned. Why couldn't these Christians hold an election without

starting a riot? A column of soldiers dispersed the crowd. Everyone fell silent as Ambrose entered the cathedral and addressed the gathering: "Enough of this nonsense! You Arians hate the Catholics and you Catholics hate the Arians. Well then, choose somebody else!" The Christians stared at him in silence. Of course, that was the answer! A voice from the back cried out: "Ambrose for bishop!" Every mouth opened and repeated the same cry: "Ambrose for bishop!"

Now it was Ambrose who stood in silence and fear, facing this mob. How was this possible? His only hope was to talk his way out of this mess. "I cannot be your bishop," he shouted, "I am not even a Christian. I admire your religion, but I hardly understand it. I am not yet baptized!" Several of the priests stepped forward and said simply: "You are the man! You are chosen! Baptism can be arranged



immediately.” Breathing deeply, Ambrose collected his thoughts. He had no intention of letting this silly proposal continue; there was one way to stop it. He stepped up to the pulpit and calmly addressed the crowd. He thanked them for the honor of being chosen as bishop and informed them that his responsibilities with the Imperial Government regrettably precluded the possibility of such a nomination. He called for prayer and silence, promised that a new election would be held soon, and adjourned the meeting.

The Right Stuff

In his simplicity, Ambrose probably thought that was the end of the matter. The people dispersed, but both the Catholics and the Arians agreed on one point: “Ambrose was the man for this job.” His objections were strong, but they could be overcome. The fact that he was not yet a Christian was in his favor, since he had no preconceived opinions about the Arian heresy. Eventually he would make up his own mind. His responsibilities as governor could also be seen as an asset. Some of the leading citizens put together a petition to the Emperor, asking for Ambrose as their bishop. The Emperor was flattered by the idea that one of his men had been elected to this position in a capital city. He sent Ambrose a letter, relieving him of his responsibilities. Within a week, at the beginning of December 374, Ambrose had been baptized, ordained priest, and consecrated bishop.

Ambrose took his new job seriously. He began with a thorough study of the Bible and the writings of the great Catholic teachers, Origen and St. Basil. The Arians probably thought that Ambrose would accept their heresy, or at least tolerate it. But he learned theology so well that he converted most of the heretics in Milan. Now St. Ambrose is honored, with St. Basil, as a Father of the Church.

Pagans and Heretics

When he was a pagan, Ambrose had understood the shallowness of worship offered to the Roman gods. Very few people really believed in Jupiter

or Juno. The offering of incense in the temples was a formality supported by tradition and government approval. In 313, when the Edict of Milan legalized Christianity, there was a great increase in conversions to Christianity. Ambrose saw the need to do more, so he convinced the Emperor to disestablish paganism. Pagan temples had endowments of property. It was all confiscated. Pagan priests had tax exemptions and special status. They were taken away. Pagans were not forced to be baptized, but it ceased to be convenient to be a pagan. Ambrose was clearing a way for the establishment of a Christian state.

Looking back, it is easy to say that the most important man converted by Ambrose was Augustine. But, at the time, Augustine was just a minor government official, a rhetorician at court, and a heretic. Augustine had learned about Christianity from his mother, St. Monica, but he was unconvinced. He went to listen to the sermons of St. Ambrose out of a professional interest in rhetoric; he came away convinced of Catholic truth. Thus, in September 386, one future doctor of the Church baptized another. St. Augustine later wrote of St. Ambrose: “He was one of those who speak the truth, and speak it well, judiciously, pointedly, and with beauty and power of expression” (*De Doct. Christ.*, iv, 21).

The Things That are Not Caesar’s

When the Emperor died, his widow, Justina, was left as regent for her young son. She was an Arian and she wanted some of the churches of Milan to be given to Arian priests. The bishop refused. Justina commanded: “You must obey the Emperor!” Ambrose answered: “No. Palaces are a matter for the Emperor’s concern, but churches belong to the bishop.”

Ambrose won the day, but this same problem was going to keep recurring. Milan had replaced Rome as the Italian capital, so Ambrose, rather than the Pope, had to deal with the Emperor. His most famous conflict came in A.D. 390, with the Emperor Theodosius the Great. Here, in a dramatic scene, Ambrose asserted that the

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Christian Culture

Emperor was subject to the church.

At Thessalonica, in Macedonia, a local hero, a charioteer, was arrested. The crowd at the stadium rioted, threw stones, and killed a high official. It was murder, committed by a crowd, and Theodosius the Great planned to take his revenge on the crowd. He ordered the chariot races to continue. A crowd of 7,000 gathered in the stadium; then the army surrounded and murdered the crowd. It was imperial revenge at the cost of 7,000 lives for one.

Ambrose tried to deal with it quietly. He sent a private letter, for the Emperor's eyes only, begging the Emperor to repent. He tactfully recalled the story of King David, who repented the murder of Urias. Theodosius did not reply, but he passed a law requiring a one-month delay between a sentence of death and execution.

Perhaps he thought that was enough. Theodosius went to the cathedral for Mass and the bishop met him at the door. In a voice for all to hear, Ambrose told the most powerful man in the world that he was not allowed to enter. For the first time ever, an emperor was excommunicated.

For months the matter gnawed on the Emperor's soul. He was a man who had sinned publicly, and he knew that his sin could only be forgiven by public penance. Finally, on Christmas Day, Theodosius removed his royal robes, lay down on the cathedral floor in front of the bishop, and confessed his sins. Ambrose pardoned Theodosius by the power of Christ; then he gave him Holy Communion. Afterwards, Theodosius said: "I know no bishop worthy of the name, except Ambrose."

Beautiful Music and Beautiful Death

After a public confession, the seven penitential psalms were probably sung by a choir. Ambrose loved church music, especially the chanting of psalms. He wrote many hymns, including some still used in the Roman Breviary. A style of singing called Ambrosian chant (with a simpler melody than Gregorian chant) is still used in connection with the Ambrosian rite of the Traditional Mass.

In January 395, Emperor Theodosius the Great died at Milan. His favorite bishop was at his bedside. Ambrose was always solicitous about his pastoral duties; he probably worked himself to an early death.

The Ambrosian hymn sung at None (3 p.m.), is a testimony to St. Ambrose's attitude: "*Largire lumen vespere, quo vita nusquam decidad, sed praemium mortis sacrae perennis instet gloria*—Grant us light in the evening so that life may not decay at any point of its activity, but everlasting glory be the immediate reward of a happy death."

After twenty-three years as a bishop, Ambrose collapsed. He was carried to his cathedral where he lay on the floor with his arms extended in the form of a cross; he received Holy Communion, and after swallowing it, he died peacefully on Good Friday, 397. That year the Easter baptisms of adults were performed by five bishops; they had trouble doing what Ambrose used to do by himself.



Fr. Herkel was born in British Columbia, Canada, and graduated from boarding high school at St. Mary's, Kansas, in 1992. He studied for the priesthood at St. Thomas Aquinas Seminary in Winona, Minnesota, and was ordained in 2001. Since then he has been stationed in Canada. He is currently stationed at Immaculate Heart of Mary Priory in Calgary, Alberta.



Stained-glass window in the
Cathedral of Cologne

Top part: Christ hands
over the keys of the
Church to St. Peter

Center Part:
Our Lady surrounded by
the apostles on the
day of Pentecost

Bottom part:
The four Latin Church Fathers
(right bottom corner: St. Ambrose)

Right:
Detail of St. Ambrose from the
above picture



Saying What Is, Is, Beautifully

On Literature

by Andrew J. Clarendon

¹ Dante Alighieri, *The Divine Comedy in The Portable Dante*, trans. and ed. Mark Musa (New York: Penguin Classics, 2003), *Paradiso* I.1-3.

² Daniel J. Sullivan, *An Introduction to Philosophy* (Rockford, IL: TAN Books, 1992), 78.

³ Dante, *Inf.* XI, 105.

⁴ John Oesterle, *Logic: The Art of Defining and Reasoning*, 2nd ed. (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1963), 250.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 250.

Dante opens the third part of his supreme literary achievement with a universal statement: “The glory of the One Who moves all things / penetrates all the universe, reflecting / in one part more and in another less.”¹ Here, at the summit of the medieval cultural synthesis, is a poetic expression of the essence of nature, that creation is a varied manifestation of the unity of the *logos* Who was there from the beginning and before the beginning. It has always been the quest of humanity to seek to know as much of the Creator and His creation as possible; this leads to the sciences of theology, philosophy, mathematics, and the rest. From the beginning, however, there has been another way to try to capture the Word: the road to God that involves imitating His creative power. These are the arts, an activity of creation that “presupposes knowledge on the part of the artist . . . [a] knowledge [that] knows not in order to know, but in order to produce,”² an imitation of nature that can be considered “God’s grandchild.”³ The most intellectual of the traditional seven fine arts, the only one to engage in argumentation,⁴ the one practiced by the Word Himself while on earth, is literature. This mode of creative imitation uses the mysterious connection between ideas and words—which can only be known by the intellect⁵—in



⁶ William Shakespeare, *Hamlet* in *The Complete Works of Shakespeare*, ed. David Bevington, 4th ed. (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, Inc., 1992), 3.2.22.

⁷ Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, trans. James E. C. Welldon, in *On Man in the Universe* (New York: Walter J. Black, Inc., 1943), 173.

⁸ Oscar Wilde, preface to *The Picture of Dorian Gray* (New York: Lancer Books, Inc., 1968), 5.

⁹ Condé B. Pallen, *The Philosophy of Literature* (1897; reprint, Whitefish, MT: Kessinger Publishing Legacy Reprints, 2008), 93.

¹⁰ Oesterle, *Logic*, 250.

¹¹ Sullivan, *Introduction to Philosophy*, 77.

¹² Oesterle, *Logic*, 250.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 250.

order to convey truth. By way of definition, literature is the art of creating beautifully truthful statements in order to teach and entertain.

It is significant that the word for poet is derived from the Greek word *poiein*, which means to create. The artist imitates the creative power of God because he cannot help but do so. There is a breathing forth of the self that seeks to share the artist's inner life with his fellow men, mind speaking to mind and heart to heart. In trying to understand himself and his world, the artist "holds the mirror up to nature"⁶ and describes what he sees using, in the literary sphere, language in various ways. However, it is not enough merely to make, to be a master of grammar and form. Aristotle, at the dawn of literary criticism, stresses that in order to be good, this "creative state of mind [must be] under the guidance of true reason."⁷ Although the collection of statements that make up a work of literature must be well written, the primary focus cannot be on this because all literature has as its principal aim the truth. In his sly preface to *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, Oscar Wilde seemingly shocks the reader with the claim that "They are the elect to whom beautiful things mean only beauty. There is no such thing as a moral or an immoral book. Books are well written, or badly written. That is all."⁸ In fact, it is quite impossible for something to be beautiful without being true. Beauty itself is "the splendor of truth [and] truth is absolute unity . . . [so], the law of beauty in the visible order consists in the manifestation of the unity of truth in sensible variety."⁹ In other words, to state that literature is the creation of beautifully truthful statements is really to state the same thing twice from differing points of view—an ontological necessity. As a speaker of the truth, the author, in the presentation of human beings, "has the obligation . . . to represent good human action as good and bad human action as bad."¹⁰ For an author to present good as evil or evil as good would be both immoral and inartistic. Prefaces aside, Dorian's picture does turn horribly ugly.

The final cause of literature, to teach and delight, stems from this. What the author offers is what St. Thomas terms "connatural"¹¹ knowledge: an understanding of reality as it is lived and experienced among men. The artist is one who sees more deeply into human nature than ordinary people and one who can, at least to a degree, communicate this knowledge. This knowledge has a universal quality but is necessarily put in terms of the singular; in other words, literature is a vitalized, striking, and concrete presentation of universal principles.¹² Everyone knows from at least the natural law that murder is an evil—the catechism reminds us it can lead one to hell—but to witness Macbeth's descent or to contemplate Count Ugolino is to convey the point in a more vivid fashion. Since fallen man lives in a fallen world, literature, to be truthful and realistic, must be concerned about vice as well as virtue, but always with the end of trying to persuade humanity to acquire virtue. Although the poetic form of argumentation is the weakest in terms of logic, in its teaching office it is more influential because men are more likely to understand and appreciate representations of virtue than reasoning upon moral truths.¹³

This movement of the human mind and heart is initially and powerfully accomplished by the other purpose of literature, to entertain and delight. It is not enough for the author to accurately convey truth; the representation >

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 249.

¹⁵ Sister Miriam Joseph, C.S.C., *The Trivium*, ed. Marguerite McGlinn (Philadelphia: Paul Dry Books, 2002), 228-229.

¹⁶ Oesterle, *Logic*, 250.

¹⁷ William Wordsworth, "Ode: Intimations of Immortality" in *William Wordsworth: Selected Poems*, ed. John O. Hayden (New York: Penguin Books, 1994), 204.

¹⁸ *Hamlet*, 2.2.309.

¹⁹ *Inf.*, I, 60.

of truth must be pleasing to the reader in order to win his assent to the author's judgments.¹⁴ Since the medium of literature is words, the first aspect of delight involves pleasure created by sound. The words themselves, along with their combinations in devices such as rhyme or alliteration, are analogous to the effect of music. Dante's definition of poetry as a "rhetorical composition set to music" includes this aspect of literature. Another element of the joy caused by literature involves the images created by the author's words. While a painter uses colors and lines to convey his message, an author paints with words. An ancient Greek saying describes the parallel: "Poetry is a talking picture, while painting is poetry keeping silent." The imagination delights in the images conveyed by beautiful words while the intellect is fed by the most important truths; this is concisely expressed, for example, in Samuel Johnson's famous definition of poetry as "the art of uniting pleasure with truth by calling imagination to the help of reason." Literature, although related to the great sciences of theology and philosophy, is, so to speak, more human: it embraces the whole of the reader, using all three of Aristotle's rhetorical appeals¹⁵ to persuade while achieving "the ordering of the passions."¹⁶ The delightful wisdom experienced by literature is what keeps the reader returning again and again to hear the same poetic music, to contemplate "Thoughts that do often lie too deep for tears."¹⁷

In an increasingly technological and materialistic age, humanity is in danger of rejecting and then forgetting what life is for; we are busy reducing man to a consumer and ultimately to nothing but the "quintessence of dust."¹⁸ Nevertheless, since the lessons are universal and human nature is a constant, the works of the great masters have permanent value, transcending their own time, even in a decadent age. The great literary tradition, stretching back millennia, "saves us"—as Chesterton puts it—"the degradation of being children of our age." Even after 2700 years, we can still learn from Homer, but Homer must be read and understood if he and the rest of the wise old masters are to save us. Tender is the thread of civilization that connects these guides to the present, and delicate is the living culture tended by the preservers and restorers for the next generation. We abandon these beautifully truthful expressions of the Word, indifferently forgetful, fleeing down "back to where the sun is mute,"¹⁹ at our peril.



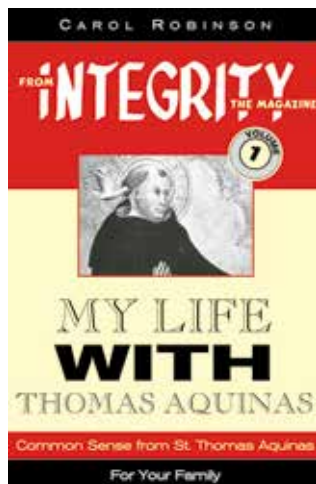
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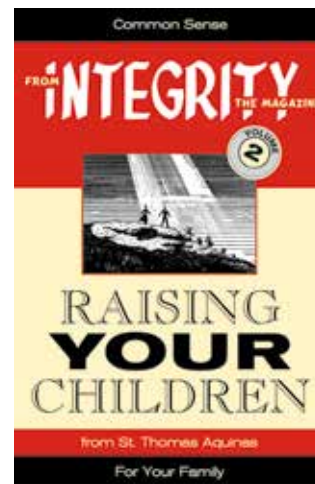
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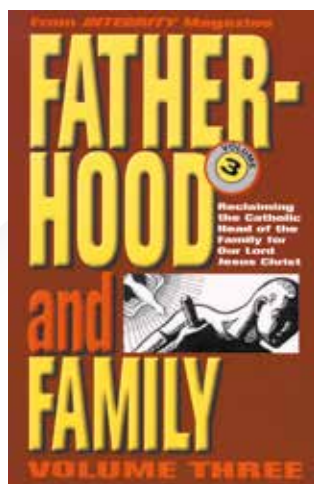
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Garcia Moreno to the Altars!

by Fr. Paul Kimball, SSPX

The president-martyr of Ecuador, Gabriel Garcia Moreno, who was assassinated by order of Freemasonry for being a model Catholic statesman, ought to be raised to the altars for the following reasons:

Papal Promoters

Such was the explicit desire of Pope St. Pius X. It was November 1, 1907, when Monsignor Manuel Maria Polit was in Rome and received episcopal consecration. In an audience with his Holiness Pope Pius X, he heard these words from his lips: “You ought to introduce Garcia Moreno’s cause of beatification. Take advantage of my Pontificate. You Ecuadorians will never find a Pope like me, so desirous of placing your Hero on the altars, nor a College of Cardinals like the present one, so eager to contribute to the glorification of such an exalted person.”

“Oh, Holy Father,” the newly-consecrated bishop answered, “the situation in Ecuador, as Your Holiness well knows, is horrifying. The government would never permit the least step in this regard. Unfortunately, in our



¹ Fr. Severo Gomezjurado, S.J., *Vida de Garcia Moreno*, Vol. 11, p. 268, and *La Consecracion*, pp. 278-279.

² Augustine Berthe, C.S.S.R., *Garcia Moreno* (Dolorosa Press, 2006), p. 334.

³ Gomezjurado, *Vida de Garcia Moreno*, Vol. 12, p. 406.

country antichristian political circumstances prevail to such a degree that it would be a dangerous temerity to initiate this so praiseworthy cause. For now, it only remains for us to wait in patience and to trust in God for a favorable, or a perhaps less adverse, future time for our immortal hero.”

His Holiness listened to these words with sorrow, and went on to treat of other matters.¹

Distinguished by the Spirit of Justice

Venerable Pope Pius IX spoke of him as a martyr worthy of public honor by the Church: “In the midst of all this, the Republic of Ecuador was miraculously distinguished by the spirit of justice and the unshakeable faith of its President, who showed himself ever the submissive son of the Church, full of devotion for the Holy See and of zeal to maintain religion and piety throughout his nation. And now the impious, in their blind fury, look upon, as an insult to their pretended modern civilization, the existence of a Government, which, while concerning itself with the material well-being of the people, strives at the same time to assure its moral and spiritual progress. Then, in the councils of darkness organized by the sects, these villains decreed the murder of the illustrious President. He fell under the steel of an assassin, as a victim to his faith and Christian charity” (Address of Pope Pius IX to the pilgrims of Laval on September 20, 1875).

Pope Pius IX did not limit himself to words. A few days later he had a magnificent funeral service celebrated for the soul of Garcia Moreno in the Basilica of Our Lady in Trastevere, as Pontiffs do when God has taken away one of the most eminent children of the Church; and when certain Italian Catholics determined to erect a statue in his honor, Pius IX largely contributed to it, and placed it in the South American College in Rome. On the four sides of this monument is the following inscription: “To the faithful guardian of Religion, patron of the sciences, most devoted to the Holy See, upholder of justice, avenger of crime. Gabriel Garcia Moreno, President of the Republic of Ecuador, was treacherously assassinated by the hand of the wicked on August 6, 1875. Good men of the whole world celebrated his heroic virtues, his glorious death for the faith, and wept over the crime which took him from the world. The Sovereign Pontiff Pope Pius IX, by his munificence and by the gifts of a great number of Catholics, has raised this monument to the courageous defender of the Church and society.”²

Pope Pius XII called him a martyr in 1948:

“In 1948, the former Cardinal, Eugenio Pacelli, was the Supreme Pontiff, Pius XII, who, when responding to the introductory address of the Ecuadorian Ambassador, Don Carlos Manuel Larrea, recalled President Garcia Moreno and honored him with these epithets: ‘Great statesman, faithful son of the Church and martyr for his faith.’ This was on eighteenth of July of the aforementioned year.”³

In 1954, when speaking with Cardinal Dacosta, Archbishop of Florence, he said to him, “One of the causes of canonization that I would most willingly like to see in Rome is that of Garcia Moreno.”⁴

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⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 407.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 348, where footnote 25 reads in these terms: "It was Bishop Ordonez, an eyewitness, who told me of the energetic expression and words of the Metropolitan, who always took pride in valiantly promoting the beatification of Garcia Moreno without taking notice of the Masons."

Beatification Started

His cause of beatification was begun in Quito by decree of Archbishop Carlos Maria de la Torre in the following words:

"Serious and prudent men well versed in Sacred Theology, and who have studied with special care and diligence, inside and outside of the Republic, the death of Lord Doctor Don Gabriel Garcia Moreno and the cause which motivated it, believe that they have discovered in these the essential marks and characteristics of a true martyrdom.

"It seems to them that the deaths of Saint Canute, Saint Wenceslaus, Saint Thomas of Canterbury, and of the English Catholics sacrificed during the fateful days of Henry VIII and Elizabeth I, maintain perfect consonance and analogy to the death of the Ecuadorian President; and that, if the infallible decision of the Church has decorated them with the aureola of martyrdom, she could well encircle the brow of this man with it also.

"Such an assessment is far from negligible indeed, as is the interest that not only simple and devout faithful but even conspicuous members of the College of Cardinals have shown so that, within the canonical framework, everything possible would be done for the extremely upright President to be placed upon the altars, who, notwithstanding the incredulity and apostasy of his century, gloried in his Faith and his unwavering adherence to the Church and to the Vicar of Christ, in his innermost conviction, expressed by constant and superhuman efforts, that only the nation which recognizes Christ's sovereignty in its customs, its laws and its constitution, will be happy. They have moved us to take the first steps toward the clarification of such an important point.

"How much glory we would give to God, with what new splendor the Church would be clothed, and what unfading honor would redound to our country, if with infallible lips the Roman Pontiff would declare that Garcia Moreno was and ought to be called 'a martyr of Christ!'"⁵

"...Therefore, after invoking the light of the Holy Ghost, having heard the views of our Fiscal Promoter; fearful of incurring Divine indignation, if perchance we put forward some resistance to the designs which perhaps God may have upon the privileged soul of whom Pius IX said that 'he had fallen victim of his faith and of his Christian charity,' and Leo XIII that 'he surrendered his life for the Church at the hands of the wicked,' and the Congress of 1875, that 'he shed his blood for the holy cause of religion, morality and order, peace and progress,' in compliance with that which has been ordained by the Sacred Congregation of Rites in the document cited above: we deem it beneficial to constitute the Historical Commission which will have for its end to gather all the historical documents relating to the death and the cause that motivated it, or the long standing fame of martyrdom of Dr. Gabriel Garcia Moreno, who died riddled with gun wounds in the Plaza of Independence of Quito, the first Friday, August 6, 1875. This commission will be composed of the Very Reverend Juan de Dios Navas, Magisterial Canon of our Metropolitan church and archivist of our Ecclesiastical Curia; of Reverend Father Joel Monroy, Provincial of the Order of Ransom; and of Reverend Father Jose Le Gohuir of the Company of Jesus.



⁶ Gomezjurado, *La Consagracion*, pp. 341-344.

⁷ *Boletín Eclesiástico de la Archidiócesis de Quito* (1921), p. 508. Gomezjurado, *Is Garcia Moreno a Martyr?* [Spanish], p. 151. *Vida*, Vol. 11, p. 385, and *La Consagracion*, p. 319.

⁸ Gomezjurado, *Vida*, Vol. 11, p. 308.

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 308.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 376.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 385.

“Given in Quito, on the 20th of December of 1939. Carlos Maria, Archbishop of Quito. Angel Humberto Jacome, Secretary.”⁶

Support for Canonization

In Rome the renowned theologian, Cardinal Louis Billot (+1931), strongly supported his canonization: “[Bishop Carlos Maria de la Torre’s] allocution about the great man and renowned martyr, who was Garcia Moreno, has awakened in my soul such a lively joy that I cannot find words to express it. I have read it from beginning to end. Oh, what a beautiful figure, truly worthy of being placed on the altars; worthy of being proposed as an example to our modern Catholics who, unfortunately, let themselves be more and more corrupted every day by the deadly principles of Liberalism! I fervently pray that the political conditions of Ecuador will finally permit his cause to be initiated in the Sacred Congregation of Rites. How happy I would judge myself to be if I were the Postulator!”⁷

The Ecuadorian bishops likewise supported his canonization.

- His Excellency Bishop Heredia, Bishop of Guayaquil, has said, “I have always maintained my opinion that God is asking two equally obligatory things of us: firstly, the construction of the National Basilica, so that national and perpetual worship may be given there; and secondly, the glorification, as far as possible on our part, of the Martyr of God and of country amongst us.”⁸
- The Bishop of Riobamba, Monsignor Andres Machado, said, “The day will come when Garcia Moreno will be exalted on the altars.”⁹
- The Archbishop of Quito, Monsignor Polit on January 22, 1922, referred to “the Ecuadorian Hero whom I firmly hope will rise one day to the altars as a martyr of Jesus Christ.”¹⁰
- The words of His Excellency Carlos Maria de la Torre, Bishop of Riobamba [who became the Cardinal Archbishop of Quito]: “The moral greatness of Garcia Moreno had soared to such a height that without the glorious martyrdom that was its worthy conclusion, God’s work would have been unfinished and imperfect...”¹¹

The bishops of France added their support to Garcia Moreno’s canonization.

When His Grace, Archbishop Manuel Maria Polit of Quito returned to Guayaquil from a three-month stay in Europe, he gave the following discourse on August sixth, the anniversary of the death of Garcia Moreno:

“In Paris, while conversing with some eminent bishops, I said to them that one of the objectives of my trip consisted in delivering the Informative Processes of our Servants of God, Reverend Father Jose Maria Yerovi and [Saint] Brother Miguel Febres Cordero. This statement not having been well received, those French prelates opposed me with these words: ‘Put these Causes aside for now, and undertake the Cause of Beatification of Garcia Moreno. Bishops and religious of eminent virtue abound on the altars; whereas the exaltation of someone like Garcia Moreno would be the first >

¹² *Ibid.*, Vol. 12, pp. 181-182.

¹³ *I.e.* the picture of the Sacred Heart of Jesus used by Garcia Moreno for the consecration of Ecuador that inspired Father Mateo to begin spreading the practice of the Home Enthronement of Families to the Sacred Heart.

¹⁴ Gomezjurado, *Vida*, Vol. 11, p. 129.

¹⁵ The *Jivaros* are South American Indians of eastern Ecuador and northeast Peru.

¹⁶ Gomezjurado, *Vida*, Vol. 13, pp. 408-409.

and sensational case of a president of a republic haloed with such honors. Commission the Ecuadorians to collect all the documents that exist in your country regarding the death of Garcia Moreno, and all the rest will be done by the French Episcopate.”¹²

Fr. Mateo Crawley, the founder of the home enthronement of the Sacred Heart, longed for his canonization.

“Even more, I dare say that it was Garcia Moreno who, with his hands anointed with his glorious blood, put the precious *Labarum*¹³ into my hands. Oh! And how happy I would consider myself to be if one day it were given to me to contribute in some way to his exaltation on the altars, in order to pay for the gift that he gave me, which gave a definitive direction to my vocation of social apostolate! If then, one day, the Church renders such glory to the President-martyr, the Congregation of the Sacred Hearts should attain that Rome would assign him to us as Patron of the Enthronement Crusade, since I made my debut in the shadow of his standard.”¹⁴

Miracles through His Intercession

At the end of November 1943, the historic oleograph of the Heart of Jesus of Garcia Moreno was exposed in the Cathedral of Loja, receiving the homage of the crowds, when the Franciscan Brother Diego Navarrete joined them and raised the following prayer: “O Garcia Moreno, you who consecrated Ecuador to the Heart of Jesus before this picture, work a miracle, make me recover the use of my ears. I was given no hope in Quito, a cold climate; I was given no hope in Guayaquil, a hot climate; I was given no hope in Loja, a moderate climate. I want to be a missionary in Zamora, to teach the catechism to the *Jivaros*.¹⁵ But how can I do it being deaf? You, who consecrated Ecuador to the Heart of Jesus before this picture, make me hear.” A few minutes passed; he paid attention and related that he heard everything: the bell that rings, the people who pray. He exclaimed, “Now I can go to Zamora.”

Some eight years later he spoke with me in Gualaceo and said to me, “I was unable to hear for six months. I can swear that I was given no hope in Quito, in Guayaquil, and in Loja. The doctors who attended me can swear that they gave me no hope.”

Here is a case that can be considered a first class miracle; an oath was signed by Brother Navarrete and by each one of these three doctors.... I am confirmed in the persuasion that the Cause did not fail for lack of first class miracles.¹⁶

Worldwide Importance

In war-torn post World War II Belgium, Garcia Moreno is compared to Charlemagne and St. Louis of France in a booklet explaining his worldwide modern importance:

“Garcia Moreno was far from being the passing of a meteor, without



¹⁷ *Ibid.*, Vol. 12, p. 239.

¹⁸ Luis E. Cadena y Aleida, *Mensaje Profético de la Sierva de Dios, Sor Mariana Francisca de Jesus Torres y Berriochoa* (Quito: *Jesus de la Misericordia*, 1985), pp. 68-69.

¹⁹ Berthe, *Garcia Moreno*, p. i.

²⁰ Gomezjurado, *Vida*, Vol. 13, p. 417. This prayer has been approved not only by the bishops of Ecuador, but moreover by the bishops of Pasto in Columbia, of Santiago in Chile, of Sao Paulo in Brazil, and by another in Argentina through the mediation of Fr. Hervé Le Lay. It has been translated into Portuguese and English. More than 100,000 holy cards of Garcia Moreno with these prayers were distributed within forty years.

leaving a trail behind itself. Not to present his personality in all its glory would be not to give God the glory of His works, and to this great man the immortality which is due to him even on earth. It would be, moreover, to deprive the human race of an enormous help, since the life of Garcia Moreno presents a providential lesson to ward off the cataclysm which he alone undertook to remedy.

“What more beautiful example could be offered to our rulers, faced with almost superhuman difficulties which characterize these post-war years?

“In fact, the clearing of a heap of ruins, the bringing of prosperity, and above all the rectifying of the standards now so wrong, and the leading of nations according to the principles of the Christian life under the gaze of God and of His Church, did he not achieve all this in a splendid manner in a few years, within the sphere in which he had to act?” (Imprimatur, Mechelen, the eleventh day of November 1944, Jose Carton de Wiart, Vicar General).¹⁷

Our Lady of Good Success praised Garcia Moreno as a model Catholic statesman and a martyr 276 years before his heroic death for the faith.

“On January 16, 1599, Our Lady of Good Success appeared to Venerable Mother Mariana of Jesus Torres, Abbess of the Royal Convent of the Order of the Immaculate Conception, in Quito, Ecuador. Our Lady spoke to Mother Mariana these prophetic words: ‘In the nineteenth century a truly Christian president will come, a man of character, to whom our Lord God will give the palm of martyrdom in the plaza on which this convent is located. He will consecrate the Republic of Ecuador to the Divine Heart of my beloved Son and this consecration will sustain the Catholic religion in the subsequent years, which will be ill-fated for the Church. In these years, in which Masonry, that accursed sect, will seize control of the civil government, there will come a cruel persecution of all the religious communities and it will rage against mine.’”¹⁸

“This great Catholic statesman can only be Gabriel Garcia Moreno. He was assassinated in the square in front of the Cathedral and also the convent of Mother Mariana. As President of Ecuador, he had officially consecrated his country to the Sacred Heart of Jesus by a legislative decree on October 8, 1873. Our Lady’s prophecies were fulfilled to the letter! On August 6, 1875, the first Friday of the month, Garcia Moreno was assassinated. Before he died, he was carried into the Cathedral and laid at the feet of Our Lady of Seven Sorrows, where he received the last sacraments and forgave his assassin.”¹⁹

Prayer for the Canonization (With Ecclesiastical Approval)

O Sacred Heart of Jesus! Remember the consecration that President Gabriel Garcia Moreno made to Thee of his Republic; of the enthronement of Thy sacred image in his presidential home; and of his blood, shed to seal his unshakeable adherence to Thee and to Thy vicar, the Pope, and grant us the canonical glorification of such an exemplary ruler, that men powerful in deeds and words may rise up for the cause of religion and of country, and finally the particular grace which we ask of Thee, in accord with Thy good pleasure. Amen. (Ask for a particular grace and end with a Glory Be.)²⁰



The Wies Church, which is oval in plan, is preceded to the west by a semi-circular narthex. Inside, twin columns placed in front of the walls support the capriciously cut-out cornice and the wooden vaulting with its flattened profile; this defines a second interior volume where the light from the windows and the oculi is cleverly diffused both directly and indirectly. To the east, a long, deep choir is surrounded by an upper and a lower gallery.



The Importance of Your Child's

Confirmation

by Michael J. Rayes

One of the main duties of parents is to make sure your children have what they need to grow into men and women. At the most basic level, this entails food, shelter, and clothing. Children, however, need much more than that. Man is born into eternity and must one day return to the God Who created him.

Our parental mandate is to prepare our children for this meeting with our loving Savior.

Such preparation involves spiritual and intellectual formation. The sacrament of Confirmation is a major part of this development.

Children should usually be confirmed somewhere between the ages of 10 and 12. Earlier than this, and the child faces an undue hardship from memorizing doctrine. Much later, and the child is deprived of some necessary graces and help from the Holy Ghost.

When receiving Confirmation, children receive the strength of the Holy Ghost just when their young minds are beginning to comprehend ideas, but before they begin the journey of adolescence. Confirmation is also, in the psychological order, a rite of passage. These passages are important because they mark a clear transition from an earlier level of maturity to a new, stronger level. This helps your child grow.

Confirmation has four effects: It increases the sanctifying grace your dusty 11-year-old received when he was a squeaky clean, newly baptized baby. It strengthens his faith, puts an indelible mark on his young soul, and also gives him the seven gifts of the Holy Ghost.

These four effects are indeed not easy to measure. How do you know they are really there? Your son or daughter might not “feel” >

much different, any more than you did at your Confirmation. This is because the effects of the sacrament cause a change in your state of being, but are not tied to your passions, nor your sensory appetites. In other words, the soul is changed, but the emotions are usually unaffected. If one uses a strong presence of mind to reflect on the reception of the sacrament, the emotions could then be excited enough to cause a reaction: perhaps tears of joy, elation, a feeling of contentment.

Seven Gifts for Your Child

The importance of Confirmation is not in what we can see or feel; rather, it is essential for your family because of what it does for your soul and the souls of your children. Let's take a closer look at the gifts of the Holy Ghost and how to gauge their effect on your child.

The enumeration of the seven gifts comes from Isaias 11:2-3:

Wisdom,
Understanding,
Counsel,
Fortitude,
Knowledge,
Piety,
Fear of the Lord.

How do you know someone receives the gifts? It certainly may be easier to see virtues in practice, but what about the gifts? Keep in mind that when the Holy Ghost comes, one of the manifestations of His presence is a gentle wind (3 Kings 19:12-13; cf. John 3:8; John 20:22). In nature, wind cannot be seen. We can feel it rushing by, and can see its effects by watching leaves or other objects blowing past. The gifts of the Holy Ghost are similarly measured. You will eventually have evidence that the gifts are really there.

Considering these gifts, look for their effects and compare this to the child's reactions before his or her Confirmation. You may notice that the child goes to confession a little more often. Or perhaps he or she explains matters of the Faith to younger siblings differently than before. There

could be a very strong resistance to novelty in prayer or liturgical practice. One of my sons at the ripe old age of 13 told a visiting relative that her parish church is not "Catholic." (Later that evening, we discussed the virtue of prudence.)

The Gifts in Practice

St. Thomas Aquinas differentiates between worldly attributes and gifts of the Holy Ghost (*Summa*, II-II, Q. 45, A. 4). This is important because they usually have the same name. For example, a seasoned gang-member in an inner city, or a liberal university professor, may have a lot of worldly wisdom which St. Thomas considers "acquired by the study and research of reason" and can be held by men in the state of mortal sin. Wisdom as a supernatural gift, on the other hand, is to relish the things of God and to direct one's actions to God's glory.

Wisdom as a gift of the Holy Ghost is an effect of charity. Wisdom as a worldly attribute has nothing to do with charity, but rather is simply the applied use of acquired worldly knowledge.

For yourself and your children, you want both. When your 10-year-old suddenly stops running and remembers to look both ways before crossing the street, she is exercising worldly wisdom. When your 19-year-old turns in an assignment early so he can attend the rosary at his chapel instead of doing homework, he is exercising both the gift of wisdom and the worldly attribute.

You may begin to notice the effects of piety and fear of the Lord in your older teens. These two gifts balance each other: Piety directs the heart to love God as a Father and to obey Him out of love. Fear of the Lord directs the heart to dread sin out of fear of offending God as a Father. Piety is motivated by a peaceful aspiration; fear of the Lord is motivated by a dreadful aspiration. Both are necessary and considered gifts of the Holy Ghost.

How are we to understand this fear, this dread? St. Jerome used the same word for fear in two different verses when he translated the Latin Vulgate from Greek. Isaias 2:3 uses *timor Domini* (fear of the Lord) and Eph. 5:33



uses “*timeat virum*” (women should fear their husbands). This should be understood to mean fear of offending. In other words, “fear” in this context is respect, not fright.

Your older teen may sometimes seem to have a peaceful, happy aspiration to give love to God. He may other times finally drag his way into the confessional and even then appear not very happy about practicing his Faith. St. John Bosco put it dramatically in one of his dreams. Teenage boys avoided the symbolic bad meat of a poisonous snake, but they looked longingly back at the meat!

Preparation for the Sacrament

Psychologically, preparation for Confirmation may be considered a “hybrid” preparation. Parents make the child receive the sacrament and do some of the work, as with Baptism; but the recipient also has to desire it and do most of the preparation on his or her own. It is important that your child truly have a desire to receive Confirmation. Otherwise, the young soul may not be properly disposed to receive the fullest effects of the seven gifts. Perhaps one of the best ways to build this desire in your child is to spend time preparing for it, and to attend other Confirmation ceremonies before the child receives his. This gives him something for which he can yearn.

The preparation, of course, is to memorize prayers and doctrine from the catechism. One must show a serious effort to learn and practice the Faith in order to receive the benefits from the sacrament. This preparation of the child also shows your pastor that Confirmation and subsequent practice of the Faith will be taken seriously.

Preparing for Confirmation could take a span of a few months before its reception. Angelus Press produced an excellent, concise booklet, *Preparation for Confirmation*, containing all the minimum knowledge needed to be properly prepared for the sacrament.

The Fruit of Hard Work

There are clear benefits to the drilling, quizzing, reciting, and testing. All this rote memorization of doctrinal content earlier in life becomes truly valuable when dealing with a life crisis. Many adults must deal with elderly parents dying, stillborn babies, funerals of loved ones, and other heart-rending events. Those without a solid foundation of Catholic doctrine may be ill-prepared for these events, and thus grapple with the meaning of life and death. They invariably come up with a vague, humanistic, on-the-spot philosophy because they have no other answer.

The educated Catholic, on the other hand, almost instinctively knows the reason and meaning of suffering. He knows why death came into the world in the first place. The catecheticized Catholic first falls back on his knowledge of the Faith, and then uses his will to accept or reject it.

The body of catechetical knowledge is not simply for times of adult crises, however. Adolescents will find that their formation comes in handy when they begin sorting out all the input they receive from worldly events and ideas. The 15-year-old no longer simply takes what Mom says at face value. He investigates. He questions. It’s a wonderful, and sometimes scary, time of life.

Confirm this boy before his mind reaches this point. Get that indelible mark on his soul so his intellect has a frame of reference. Give him those seven gifts, so he can more easily fight temptation and love God. You are thus preparing your child for his or her eventual judgment before our blessed Redeemer.



Michael J. Rayes is a lifelong Catholic, a husband, and father of seven. He has been published by Rafka Press, *Latin Mass Magazine*, and others.

Q & A

by Fr. Peter Scott, SSPX

May one hide a part of the truth when swearing under oath?

An affirmative oath is the calling on God as witness to the truthfulness of one's statement concerning a past event. The purpose of an oath is the confirmation of a certain truth, and as such is based upon the divine attribute of omniscience. God, knowing all things, cannot be deceived. An oath confirms the truth of one's affirmations, for no one can be presumed to be culpable of such impiety and irreverence as to call upon God

as witness to a falsehood, and thus to subject himself to the justice of the Almighty.

It is of faith that oaths are licit under the right conditions, in particular when there is a proportionate reason, as is the case when witnesses are asked to swear under oath in a court of law. Moreover, such oaths are virtuous, being acts of the virtue of religion. The taking of God as a witness is, indeed, a profession of His indefectible truthfulness and His universal omniscience. However, the converse is also the case. The taking of an oath to a falsehood is



not just a venial sin, as is a lie, but a mortal sin against the virtue of religion. Moreover, there is no light matter in such a sin. Any falsehood stated under oath, even one of lesser importance, is a mortal sin against the virtue of religion.

Theologians state that there are three conditions for an oath to be licit, as explicitly declared by the prophet Jeremias (4:2). These are also explicitly stated in the 1917 (Canon 1316) and 1983 (Canon 1199) Codes of Canon Law. The first condition is the judgment of prudence as to whether there is a sufficient reason to swear an oath, so that it is truly an act of reverence of the divine majesty. Swearing the truth for trivial reasons is a venial sin. Clearly, there is a sufficient reason when a witness swears in a court of law. The common good requires it. The second condition is that it is a just and honest thing to swear, and not something evil (*e.g.* heresy) or simply the revelation of another's hidden fault, so as to destroy his reputation.

The third and most important condition, which concerns us here, is that of truthfulness. By truthfulness is meant not only that the sworn assertion is in conformity with the external reality, but also that it is in conformity with the mind of the person who swears to the truth. For truthfulness on the part of a witness excludes all lies, that is, speaking against one's own mind or personal conviction, but it does not exclude all error. Consequently, a person who swears to an erroneous statement that he is firmly convinced is true does not commit the sin of perjury, whereas a person who swears to a statement that happens to be true although he believes it to be false does commit the sin of perjury. Moreover, a person can only swear to something as certain when he is truly convinced that it is certain, and not just doubtful or probable. If he thinks that it is only probable, or that it is doubtful, then he must state as much, and not mislead others under oath into thinking that it is certain, again under pain of perjury.

The purpose of an oath being to guarantee that the witness's statements are in conformity with his personal conviction as to the objective truth, it is customary in English to administer it with the expression: "Do you swear to tell the

truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth?" Although not essential to an oath, it emphasizes that the witness in his assertions of answers to questions must tell the entire truth that is on his mind without suppressing a part of the truth (=the whole truth), nor misleading by suggesting something that is not true (=nothing but the truth). In this way, mental reservations are excluded.

There are two kinds of mental reservation. A mental reservation in the strict sense exists when the witness limits the meaning of the words to a special meaning that is not manifested outwardly and cannot be figured out from the circumstances. It is quite simply a lie and is never permissible. Innocent XI condemned the contrary opinion in 1679, namely, the opinion that the person who swears in this way "does not lie and is no perjurer" (Prop. 26, Denzinger 1176).

A mental reservation in the broad sense exists when the limitation of the meaning of the words to one particular sense can be deduced from the circumstances of things, persons, and places, as for example when a physician testifies under oath that he knows nothing, meaning by this that he knows nothing that he is able to reveal, since knowledge in this case is under a professional secret. In such a case, it is not a lie. However, the use of such a mental reservation is not permissible without a proportionately grave reason, and then only provided that there is no intention to deceive and that there is no other honest means of protecting a secret to which one is bound, or some other right due in justice. Furthermore, when an oath is sworn, a major and grave reason is required to use such a mental reservation in the broad sense, on account of the reverence that is due to the holy name of God (Merkelbach, *Th. Mor.*, II, §860).

A witness called to give evidence in a court of law will consequently commit the crime of perjury if he uses a mental reservation that the judge and jurors cannot possibly understand, for example if he were to say that he met the accused on the day in question, understanding in his own mind a meeting by video-conferencing, but allowing everybody else to understand that he met him in person. This is a mental >

Questions and Answers

reservation in the strict sense, which nobody could understand. If he were to use a mental reservation in the broad sense without sufficient reason, he would be likewise guilty of a sin against the virtue of religion. This is what Father Merkelbach has to say about this case: “He who uses a mental reservation (in the broad sense) without sufficient reason moreover commits a lie because, if there is not sufficient reason, the circumstances do not sufficiently indicate the restriction in the meaning of the words placed in the mind. Hence he who confirms such a statement with an oath, commits perjury strictly speaking” (*ibid.*, §861).

The attempt to hide a portion of the truth or evidence in a sworn testimony by a witness is effectively a mental reservation, allowing the judge and jury to think that he has given all the relevant information when in fact he has not. If he deliberately omits the cause of an accident or an important circumstance in a crime it would usually be with the intention of deceiving the judge and jury. If this evidence pertains in some way to the substance of the case, such as why an accident happened, or what kind of crime was committed, or how the crime was committed, then it is perjury. It will generally be a mental reservation in the strict sense, which is equivalent to a lie. However, there are occasions in which it is a mental reservation in the broad sense, as for example when a criminal pleads “not guilty” to a crime that he committed. This could be understood, and even expected, by anybody. In the case of the criminal who pleads “not guilty,” there is a proportionately grave reason, and everybody understands that nobody is bound to accuse himself in a court of law.

This will not easily be the case for other kinds of broad mental reservations. Firstly, it is very difficult to be sure that they are broad and not strict. If they truly are broad, it is also necessary that there be no deception involved. However, if some information is hidden, then there is in general the intention to deceive or lead astray, at least to some extent. In such a case, even if it is a broad mental reservation, it is illicit, and is effectively the same thing as a lie. The usual motives for such a mental reservation under oath

are the safeguarding of property, or obtaining a larger financial settlement. These are not sufficient to justify a broad mental reservation, as is clear from the following statement, also condemned by Pope Innocent XI: “A just reason for using these ambiguous words exists, as often as it is necessary or useful to guard the well-being of the body, honor, property, or for any other act of virtue, so that the concealing of the truth is then regarded as expedient and zealous” (Prop. 27, Dz. 1177).

In conclusion, therefore, it will not be licit to swear under oath and at the same time to hold back a substantial fact or cause or piece of information or other truth which concerns the case upon which one is a witness, unless it is clear that one has a right to withhold that information, and there is no other way of doing it (such as refusing to testify) and there is a grave reason to do so (*e.g.* the protection of the professional or confessional secret). A witness under oath must consequently tell everything that is relevant to answering the questions asked or the facts upon which he is making sworn deposition.

In the November-December 2012 issue, we accidentally attributed all three Q&A's to Fr. Dominique Bourmaud. While he did indeed write the third one, the first two were written by Fr. Peter Scott.



SSPX: Communiqué on the Election of Pope Francis I

With the news of the election of Pope Francis, the Society of St. Pius X prays to Almighty God that He abundantly bestow on the new Sovereign Pontiff



the graces necessary for the exercise of this heavy charge.

Strengthened by Divine Providence, may the new pope “confirm his brethren in the Faith” (Lk. 22:32), with the authority which St. Pius X proclaimed at the beginning of his pontificate: “We do not wish to be, and with the divine assistance never shall be aught before human society but the Minister of God, of whose authority We are the depositary. The interests of God shall be Our interest, and for these We are resolved to spend all Our strength and Our very life” (Encyclical *E Supremi Apostolatus*).

St. Francis of Assisi, whose name the new pontiff has taken, heard the Crucified Savior say to him, “Go, Francis and rebuild my Church.” It is in such a spirit that the bishops, priests, and religious of the Society of St. Pius X assure the Holy Father of their filial desire “to restore all things in Christ, so that Christ may be all and in all” (Eph. 1:10; Col. 3:11) according to their means, for the love of the Holy Catholic and Roman Church.

Menzingen, March 13, 2013

(Source: FSSPX/MG – DIC1, March 13, 2013)

Cardinal Bergoglio and the SSPX in Argentina

DICI obtained the opinion of Fr. Christian Bouchacourt, District Superior of South America, on the evening of the Pope’s election.

Cardinal Bergoglio wishes to be a poor man among the poor. He cultivates a militant humility, but can prove humiliating for the Church. His appearance in the loggia of St. Peter’s in a simple cassock without his rochet and mozzetta is a perfect illustration. He is a fine politician... An idealistic apostle of the poverty of the 1970s, he is completely turned towards the people, the poor, but without being a disciple of the theology of liberation.

Very conscious of the dilapidated state of his clergy, he did nothing to fix things. Never has the seminary of Buenos Aires had as few seminarians

as today. It is a disaster, as have been the liturgies presided over by the “Cardinal of the Poor.” With him, we risk seeing once again the Masses of Paul VI’s pontificate, a far cry from Benedict XVI’s efforts to restore to their honor the worthy liturgical ceremonies.

He was firmly opposed to abortion. But while he wrote a beautiful letter to the Carmelites of Buenos Aires against the homosexual “marriage” bill—which was unfortunately voted through in the end—he had a regrettable speech read during the protest against this bill in which the name of Our Lord was not pronounced even once, while the Evangelical pastor who spoke before him to excite the crowd delivered a more courageous one... (see DIC1, No. 219, July 24, 2010).

During an ecumenical meeting, he knelt to receive the blessing of two pastors.

He is a man of consensus who hates confrontations. He kept his distance from the Catholics who denounced the blasphemous expositions that were held in Buenos Aires.

I have met him five or six times, and he has always received me with benevolence, seeking to grant me what I wished without going out of his way to overcome obstacles....

(Sources: SSPX – DICI, No. 272, March 15, 2013)

The Prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith Repudiated

In early February 2013, the Prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, Archbishop Gerhard Ludwig Müller, had suspended the decision made by Cardinal Juan Luis Cipriani, Archbishop of Lima (Peru) to forbid the theology professors of the Catholic University of Peru to teach. In a letter whose contents had been circulated by the Peruvian press, Abp. Müller asked the Peruvian cardinal to justify his prohibition, indicating that it did not have to be implemented so long as the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith had not decided the question.

On February 13, 2013, Cardinal Cipriani announced that the sanctions against the professors of the Faculty of Theology stood and that they were not authorized to teach. According to the Peruvian Catholic news agency ACI Prensa, the Archbishop of Lima considers Abp. Müller's letter asking him to lift those sanctions to have no legal force because it was not sent through official channels—indeed, it was a simple fax. Moreover it is invalid, because every bishop is autonomous in his pastoral decisions: "The only person who can give orders and make a bishop change his mind is the pope," not a Roman Congregation. In the estimation of the Archbishop of Lima, the letter from the Prefect of the CDF is merely a response to a petition that had been addressed to him by the professors of the Faculty of Theology.

The Italian website *Vatican Insider* reveals, in an article penned by Andrés Beltramo Álvarez, that in mid-February, at the pope's orders, Cardinal Tarcisio Bertone, Secretary of State of the Holy See, convoked

a meeting of cardinals which in effect invalidated the "personal" initiative of Abp. Müller, which had been written without the required formalities and dispatched through improper channels, without consulting the specialists of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith and contrary to canon law. Cardinal Bertone thus informed Cardinal Juan Luis Cipriani that Abp. Müller's act was null and void, and that the Holy See was changing nothing of what he had decided in June 2012, namely, to withdraw from the University of Peru its canonical titles as a "Catholic" and "Pontifical" university. Andrés Beltramo Álvarez concluded: "Some Curia insiders are beginning to wonder whether Abp. Müller is really the right man for a post of such enormous responsibility, which allows for no error or improvisation, either in form or substance."

When Benedict XVI appointed Abp. Müller to head the CDF, the English journalist William Oddie wrote in the *Catholic Herald* (July 6, 2012): "[Abp. Müller is] also an old friend of the most renowned (or notorious) of liberation theologians, Gustavo Gutiérrez. He has written a book with him; and according to [American Vaticanist] John Allen, every year since 1998 has travelled to Peru to 'take a course' from Gutiérrez. In 2008, he accepted an honorary doctorate from the Pontifical Catholic University of Peru, which is widely seen as a bastion of the progressive wing of the Peruvian Church. On that occasion, he praised Gutiérrez and defended his theology. 'The theology of Gustavo Gutiérrez, independently of how you look at it, is orthodox because it is orthopractic,' he is on record as saying: 'It teaches us the correct way of acting in a Christian fashion since it comes from true faith.'" —No comment.

(Sources : La Croix/KNA/Apic/Vatican Insider/Catholic Herald – DICI, No. 271, March 1, 2013)



Syria: “May God have mercy on us!”

Thus exclaimed the Patriarch of Antioch Gregoire III Laham and Msgr. Pascal Gollnisch on the situation in Syria.

“We are out of bread and vegetables... The message of Christianity is becoming above all a message of the redeeming Cross, of love and forgiveness. Will we have the prophetic courage to take on the adventure?” asked Archbishop Samir Nassar, Maronite archbishop of Damascus in November 2012. “Facing this challenge, this solitude of chaos and bitterness, we have great need of your prayers and your friendship,” he continued. “Besides lodgings and food, the refugees need clothing and medicine,” stated Archbishop Nicolas Sawaf of the Greek Catholics in Latakia. Msgr. Pascal Gollnisch, director of the Oeuvre de l’Orient, a French Catholic organization supporting Eastern Christians, read on November 23 from a letter of the Carmelites in Aleppo, expressing their fear: “There are more and more bombings and gunfire! May God have mercy on us!”

In Syria, it was no Arab Spring, according to Archbishop Mario Zenari, Apostolic Nuncio to Damascus. From early November on, he told the Italian Catholic agency AsiaNews on November 17, 2012, the situation had deteriorated extremely rapidly; first there were bombings and then reprisals from political and religious groups along with local criminal activity. Hundreds of kidnappings, encouraged by the atmosphere of instability, had decimated families. Not only were the rich targeted, but now the poor as well. Several of the Archbishop’s own employees, he added, were living in the nunciature because they were afraid to return home. Others had no roof left and were sleeping in basements or temporary shelters. Parish locales had become dormitories. Convents were extending hospitality to as many as they could, filling every space, even the gardens. The Church had made every building available, from offices to shops to places of worship. The Patriarch of Antioch, Gregory III Laham, called the situation “tragic and chaotic.” In his opinion this war is a “revolution” with neither face nor identity. “Two thousand groups claim to adhere to the revolution

and to the rights of man; it is unclear whether they are Syrians or foreigners.”

On October 22, 2012, Christians in Damascus told Aid to the Church in Need (ACN), “The number of kidnappings is growing. Very recently, Qatar reduced its financial support. The opposition resorts to kidnapping Christians, Alawites, and the Druze, and holds them for ransom to obtain the financing they need.” In Damascus, more generally, the majority of institutions are closed. The armed opponents of the government are pushing to halt civilian life.

On January 30, 2013, Archbishop Boutros Marayati of the Armenian Catholics of Aleppo described what residents in the Syrian metropolis are experiencing to news agency Fides: “The consequence of the conditions in which we have been living for over a year is that we have become accustomed to daily horrors. There is always news of further massacres. There is the constant sound of bombing. We live in a state of tension and fear, day and night. It is difficult to survive when you cannot even find drinking water or fuel to heat your home. We are so overwhelmed by all these things that we have barely any time to reflect on the terrible events in which we are immersed.

“News is always misreported. You cannot believe what you hear, and there is no way to verify the facts, not even for events that take place in our own areas, at little distance. We are in the middle of a war, but we live as if we were in the dark, without fully understanding what is happening. We only wonder when and how it will all end.”

On February 9, three priests were detained in Aleppo and Damascus. On February 21, ACN said it had not heard from them. The three in question are Armenian Catholic priest Michel Kayal, Greek Orthodox priest Maher Mahfouz (who was travelling by bus to the Salesian house in Kafroun), and Greek Catholic priest Hassan Tabara. The Syrian Church has never paid and never will pay ransoms for kidnapped Christians, reported Fides on February 18, 2013. A crusade of prayers and sacrifices to save Syrian victims of kidnapping has been launched.

Seven hundred thousand emigrants (mostly in

Turkey, but also in Lebanon, Egypt, Jordan, and Iraq), 3 million refugees within the country (of which the majority are destitute), 80 percent of the population unable to go to work, 70 percent of the population living below the poverty threshold: these are the numbers given by ACN on February 21, and at the same time there is a shortage of fuel, bread, water, blankets... On February 13, for the fifth day in a row, Aleppo experienced a power outage and hospitals were out of basic supplies. "It seems that the rebels cut the power lines from the Tabqa dam," the biggest power dam in the country, built on the Euphrates River, now in the revolutionaries' hands.

On February 21, Archbishop Mario Zenari, after attacks struck the center of Damascus that very morning, told Fides, "We are still walking among corpses. Now, in Damascus too, when we walk in the streets, everywhere we find places where innocent human blood has been shed: that of civilians, of women, of children. The number of victims of this conflict—70,000—is even more overwhelming when you consider the manner in

which these people died."

But while the Syrian people are sacrificed, "the international community continues to play Pontius Pilate," whereas the only possible means of putting a stop to the spiral of death and destruction is to "force the opposing parties to negotiate a peaceful end to the crisis," said the Nuncio.

As for the rumors repeated by the Alef Agency of a possible attack on his person, Archbishop Zenari explains, "I do not know whether these rumors can be believed. Usually people plotting an attack do not announce their plans via the media ahead of time. My appeals are only based on the observation of the sufferings this conflict has imposed on the Syrian people, sufferings perpetuated by the indifference of a significant part of the international community." And he concludes, "Christians are suffering in this tragic situation just as everyone else is."

(Sources: kipa-apic.ch/Fides/Oeuvre de l'Orient/ACN/AsiaNews/ Missionary International – DICI, No. 271, March 1, 2013)

Indonesia: Catholic Schools Threatened with Closing

Six Catholic schools of the Diocese of Surabaya, in the province of East Java, Indonesia, are threatened with closing. They refuse to submit to the new directives of local authorities obliging all establishments to teach Islam and the Koran to their Muslim students. Up until now, the custom was for Muslim students in Christian schools to receive private religious instruction, generally from Muslim associations.

According to a dispatch published on January 18, 2013, by Eglises d'Asie, the information agency of the Foreign Missions of Paris, Aan Ansori, head of the Islamic Anti-Discrimination Network, took up the defense of the Christian schools. He declared that he doubted that the same would be demanded of Muslim schools, asking: "If these rules are applied, are Muslim schools, which are much more selective than Catholic schools in accepting students of different

religions, really going to give classes for Buddhists, Christians, or Hindus?"

Indonesia is the world's largest Muslim country. With 206 million inhabitants, the Muslims make up 86.1 percent of the population according to the 2000 census, while Christians only make up 8.7 percent. Religious instruction is obligatory in the Indonesian school system.

(Sources: Apic/EDA – DICI, No. 271, March 1, 2013)



The New Theological Babel

The Renunciation Of Juridical Language and Its Consequences

By Mario Palmaro

One of the aspects which characterize the language used by the texts of Vatican II is the renunciation of juridical language.

To use a language means to acquire a certain mental elasticity coherent with it. When one studies a foreign language it is said that the language is learned well when one begins to think in that language, because between the language one uses and one's way of thinking there is a strong connection.

Naturally, the use of language most adapted to the ears of men, we could say, and to the changes in society which are seen over time is not scandalous in itself, but is in keeping with a concern which is always present in the Church. The mistake, sometimes, is in presenting the 'pastoral approach' as something absolutely new or absolutely unheard of, as if there were eighteen hundred years of absolute pastoral insensitivity, and that at a certain point it was suddenly discovered.

In reality, this is a problem which presents itself in repeated cycles, because it is true that history and the

world change, that cultures, society, and customs tend to undergo transformations, so it would not even be correct to think of a total immutability of language.

Nonetheless, it would likewise be erroneous to think that language can be transformed, or even completely changed and abandoned without consequences. Thus a point of balance is achieved in that which serves as communication, as was the case, for example, with the Native Americans or with the Indians of South America which the Christians found at the beginning of the fifteenth century, because the missionaries did not wait until 1962 to have this pastoral concern. At the same time, though, it must be clear what in this attention to language—which has been called inculturation of the Faith—can be negotiable, or what can be put in play and what, on the other hand, cannot be negotiated because it would no longer communicate the truth.

Considering the topic of Vatican II and looking at the history of the Church, we realize that in its communication the Catholic Church has used three columns. These three columns of Catholic communication,

which I and Alessandro Gnocchi have briefly analyzed in our book,¹ are: the use of the Latin language, a style of preaching based on apologetics, and the definitional and juridical style.

Definitional Language

The third column of the communication of the Church is the use of the juridical-definitional style which historically has characterized the language of the Church over time and has produced some objective consequences. It has been fundamental, for example, for the counteracting of heresies.

The Church has continued defining her doctrinal patrimony progressively, even solemnly, and responding stroke by stroke to those tendencies which from her midst have come out with certain ideas and opinions which were truly theologically heretical.

Definitional language is a perfect, ideal language to counteract heresy. A language which is instead descriptive, existential, or empathetic would have been able with great difficulty to shave the edge off heresy, which is basically always a definitional affirmation of an error. Juridical-definitional language has allowed the Church over time to make Catholic doctrine precise without equivocations and ambiguities. Thus the method is to be succinct, because a good school of writing teaches that a text is finished when it has been cut, shortened.

When does one write well? When one has time to edit. When one does not have the time to write, one writes too much. When one wants to write a nice article, a nice book, one starts using scissors, rather than adding. A text is more effective when it is concise, based also on the theory of communication which uses the image of the bullet. If I send out a single message, I am much surer that this message will reach its destination. I have a precise target and I shoot a shot in a certain direction. If, instead, I have the ambition to shoot several messages, in the end no one knows what I even wanted to say. This rule of communication holds true in a particular way for texts of the Magisterium.

Juridical-definitional language has been an antidote to an experiential, emotional, and existential idea of the Catholic Faith, exactly the type of idea which, not coincidentally, has spread in these last decades.

Now, to say one has an experiential, emotional, or existential idea of the Catholic Faith does not mean that one has a totally erroneous idea because the

Catholic Faith is certainly also a communication of experience, it is a life that has been lived, an effort of coherence between what one believes and what one lives. But the error is in the fact of reducing the Catholic Faith to existence only, to experience only, to an empathetic tendency only, because at that point doctrine becomes absent. If one lives only of empathy, of sensation, even of great emotional rapture, things which may have their due place and are also a help, at a certain point if you put ten of such emotional people around a table comparing their faith, you find, perhaps, ten completely different beliefs.

It is beyond discussion that this juridical-definitional style has been abandoned in the many wide-ranging texts used by the Second Vatican Council. These three "columns" of communication have been set aside, in fact, precisely because juridical-definitional language is not used. It is not rejected in a formal and unequivocal way. There is no single line in the texts of the Second Vatican Council which clearly says no to apologetics or to Latin, even though on Latin the question is more controversial, but the problem is that a language is chosen which, in the name of a pastoral approach, is no longer juridical-definitional language.

Therefore, certainly one can say without having any derogatory intent, that from the point of view of linguistic analysis, the Conciliar texts, or at least some of them, appear verbose, complex, long-winded, and characterized by a fluctuating communicative technique in which the paragraphs sometimes give the impression of contradicting each other or of changing their sense as the discourse continues. All of these are characteristics which objectively are at odds with juridical-definitional language.

You can make a comparison with the budget law. The budget goes to parliament in a certain way, then amendments are added, and in the end one no longer recognizes the original. Undoubtedly, the dialectical nature that characterized the debate within the parliamentary sessions finds itself poured out into this fluctuating style. There is a new mode of expression that has these characteristics.

Principle of Non-Contradiction

A key requirement of the definitional style is the constant employment of the principle of non-contradiction.

I will not go into the merits of the Council's topics,



because my interest is to emphasize that there is a problem of communication technique that deeply affects the substance.

To accept or not to accept the principle of non-contradiction is not just a nuance; it changes a lot. Obviously in this case there is not a rejection of the principle of non-contradiction, but there is not a habit of proceeding logically, guided by this principle. It is difficult to say that one rejects openly the principle of non-contradiction, but it can happen that one proceeds without realizing that it is being forgotten, that it is being left aside. If I were an Italian composition teacher I would say that it is an issue of sloppy logic.

The definitional style focuses on what is essential. For example, when it was said that someone was a heretic, it is not that this term was used in a derogatory way, but rather a truthful judgment was given which focused on the essential question. This person, for example, could be a very nice Lutheran, even leading a pious life, a good father, a good husband—all elements that are to his merit and also make the evaluation and judgment of this soul even more complex.

But what does definitional language say here? We're focusing on something that is essential to our discussion: that the man is a heretic. Maybe he's a great striker in soccer, but then we simply know that he is an excellent heretical striker.

The abandonment of definitional language is precisely the source of the loss of the essential element in which, in my opinion, there is nothing aggressive. Saying that someone is a heretic does not mean that you want to insult him, but you're stating a true fact with regard to his position on the truth of the Faith. Nevertheless we are great friends, we visit each other, we like each other, right?

One of the paradoxical effects of the abandonment of definitional language is that it prevents us from saying how things are, because if we say how things are, then it is assumed that we want to offend someone. And this is paradoxical. Of course, we must be vigilant in our conscience, in the purification of our intentions, because maybe we can say to someone that he is a heretic because we want to insult him, but this is a problem of the improper use of the truth, using the truth like a club to knock someone over the head. This, objectively, is never good and one must be careful not to make that mistake.

Meaning of Words

A definition is the obligatory beginning of every possible argument. Definitional language is interesting because, in addition to the principle of non-contradiction, in order to think you need to know what you mean when you use a word. This is a fundamental Thomistic approach.

First of all, let's clarify what the words we use mean. Today, most of the problems of the Catholic and non-Catholic world stem from a misunderstanding of the meaning of words. One says: "I am for the family, my four wives are fine." He, perhaps from the subjective point of view, is convinced he is for the family. Then this problem, *mutatis mutandis*, moved from the cultural environment on to theological matters is due to weak definitions. But what does one mean when one says a certain word or a certain thing? Without clarity on the concepts one cannot make judgments, or they are ambiguous ones. You see, then, what sort of landslide comes simply from the abandonment of a certain type of style.

Historians say that, in preparing the Second Vatican Council, almost two thousand pages of preparatory outlines had been prepared that reflected largely the classical outlines, using definitional language.

Apparently, John XXIII gave a generally positive opinion of these outlines; however, he did not defend them when confronted with the decision to scrap them. Therefore, the outlines were thrown away and everything began again from zero. This revolution in the use of language brought with it all of the problems pointed out by several parties.

The Roman Curia, then, had arranged the outlines, which could be likened to the tracks on which the train of theological discussion must somehow travel, forcing it to use the principle of non-contradiction and definitional style, and still in keeping with the pastoral concern for which the council itself had been convoked.

It is clear that this methodology, undoubtedly, has the effect of simplifying the work of the interpreter. The work of the interpreter, usually the Church herself, is always a bit like the relationship that exists with Sacred Scripture. In Catholic tradition, the relationship with Sacred Scripture is not based on subjective free examination, but on the fact that it is the Church that helps one to grasp and to understand in truth the meaning of the text. There is an interpretative action, but, of course, in continuity. If the text follows defini-

tional and juridical language, the work of the interpreter is decidedly simplified.

Mixture of Truth and Charity

What was the motive that led to the abandonment of definitional language? The motive was that definitional language has an assertive, categorical, sure, and concise style. With these characteristics, it is clear that the language of definition could, but not necessarily should, annoy the listeners' ears. That is, carrying the message with assertive, categorical, sure, and concise characteristics can upset someone because essentialness is effective, it is a sharp word. Jesus, meeting the Samaritan woman, tells her: "Thou hast said well, and the man whom thou now hast is not thy husband." In some ways it is a match more than a meeting.

To all this, the Church has always responded with a good mixture of truth and charity that cannot be in contradiction. That is, to be charitable one does not have to sacrifice truth on a pagan altar, and on the other hand, if one wants to impart the truth fully, it cannot be done without charity.

This is another big issue that is posed by this concept of a pastoral approach, in which one seems to discern a contrast between truth and charity, which comes from many components which are perhaps understandable, but dangerous.

If the main problem of the apostle, the Christian, the priest, of whoever is called to be a missionary, is not to disturb the listener, we are faced with a serious problem.

It is not that the disturbance of the listener is something that, to be clear, should not concern us. Think, for example, of the dialectic which for two thousand years has been held together by the Church between preaching and the relationship with the penitent. Preaching, the place of full and even harsh communication of the truth, is also the place of reproach. To the penitent it is the place of reproach, but it is also a place of forgiveness. The Church has found this balance in the way of imparting doctrinal firmness, but together with the understanding that we are all sinners.

The modern world, the atheistic world, the world which we face every day, does not understand and does not digest so many things about Catholicism, but this in particular. The modern world is a world that denies that it commits sin because it does not want to be forgiven. And that is what makes it horrific in its

relationship with Catholicism and which makes it more sympathetic instead towards that typically Protestant attitude that we cannot be like what God would like us to be, so we just modify our teaching.

Protestantism does exactly this. The bar is too high, so they let it down, and then let it down some more, until they just discard it. They remove, therefore, that moral tension that is found in Catholicism: "You have sinned, but get up again."

This idea concerning the consciences and the souls of men, is, paradoxically, defended by definitional language because to realize one needs a confessor, a priest, one needs to realize that one is sinning. In a mish-mash in which true is false and good and evil can no longer be told apart, it is difficult to understand that one is sick.

There is an analogy—it seems to me that we have written it in the book—in the relationship between doctor and patient. The good doctor is a doctor who cares about how his patient will respond to some news. You know that now it is very fashionable to theorize about transparency between doctor and patient with an approach, however, which is typically rationalistic.

We need to see how the truth is communicated to the patient, as this may become a burden that crushes him. This concern must be taken together, however, with the need to say how things are to the patient, also for the good of his soul. If a patient has a very serious condition and the doctor moved by pity hides the truth, saying, "Be calm, go home and don't worry," and the patient does not know he has little time left to live, the doctor does not even give him a chance to see his life in spiritual terms.

Somehow, the abandonment of definitional language is likely to make all of us, all of mankind, patients who go home still thinking that they have nothing wrong.

Additional Observations

On the topic of juridical language I would say that it is in fact definitional language, but some additional observations seem important to make.

The language of the Church is definitional but also juridical. What is juridical language? It is a prescriptive language. The rule of law is characterized as prescribing something one must do or must not do: "If anyone thinks that this thing is true, let him be anathema," or "If he thinks this thing is false, let him be anathema."



That is to say, "This is the truth, this is what you must hold as true." Precept and then penalty.

So, the pairing of precept-penalty is a typical result of juridical language. If one strays from that perspective, it is no longer said what must be firmly held and no longer said what happens to those who do not hold it. And this is a great lack of charity.

Of course, even here it seems fair to underscore that juridical language, like all things human, has its limits and even its risks. Therefore, in evoking the need for a return to definitional-juridical language we must not fall into a legal formalism which would be fatal for the faith. The first to complain of this formalism was Our Lord in His relationship with the Pharisees. The Pharisees are a perfect example of orthodoxy in respect to the religion of the time, characterized by a formalism against which Jesus is fiercely critical, to the point that He heaps invective on them reserved to no other class of men in the New Testament.

The return and the recovery of definitional and juridical language must not slip into formalism, or into a kind of legalism that would not be Catholic.

In juridical language there is also, however, the dialectic between law and reality that is played, for example, by the Roman jurists, with the instrument of fairness. There is a Latin saying: *Summum ius, summa iniuria*. What does this mean? It means that the truth is one thing, the law is one thing, and it cannot be changed as a favor to someone. The priest, confessor, spiritual director evaluates the circumstances, conditions, and helps set a path in which there is no room for a changing of the law itself, because the law cannot change, but there is room for a law of change.

So, realistically I think that there should not and there cannot be room for a changing of the law, but we have to somehow recognize that there may be some law of change.

But for this more time is needed.

¹ A. Gnocchi and M. Palmaro, *La bella addormentata: Perché dopo il Concilio Vaticano II la Chiesa è entrata in crisi, perché si risveglierà* (Vallecchi 2011).

Continuity or Discontinuity?

By Roberto de Mattei

The time has come, perhaps, to step outside the hermeneutical box in which Vatican II specialists have been confined. All who approach the historiographical discussion of the Council by highlighting, albeit from different viewpoints, the elements of its objective deviations from the preceding era are hastily labeled partisans of the “hermeneutic of discontinuity,” in opposition to the magisterium of Benedict XVI and his predecessors. Such, for example, is Msgr. Agostino Marchetto’s chief criterion of judgment in his recent book *Il Concilio Ecumenico Vaticano II: Per la sua corretta ermeneutica*,¹ as it had been in his previous study, *Il Concilio Ecumenico Vaticano II: Contrapunto per la sua storia*.²

In these two books, Msgr. Marchetto does the work, not so much of an historian, but of a reviewer scrutinizing everything that has been published over the last decade about Vatican II. This is not necessarily a limitation. The limitation is his resorting to accusations of “discontinuism” against the reviewed authors, thereby hiding behind a presumed teach-

ing authority on the subject in order to conceal the substantive weakness of his argumentation. But Benedict XVI in his speech to the Roman Curia of December 22, 2005, stated that the hermeneutic of discontinuity is not in opposition to a simple hermeneutic of continuity, but to a “hermeneutic of reform” the very nature of which consists in “this combination of continuity and discontinuity at different levels.” It may well be that acknowledgment of the existence of different levels of continuity and discontinuity should henceforth be the starting point.

The continuity or discontinuity of Vatican II in relation to the Church as it was before can be considered under two aspects: (1) the historical and human dimension of the Church, and (2) its ontological dimension, which is expressed by the immutability of its Tradition. It is a distinction that corresponds to the twofold nature of the Church, human and divine, and which makes for a much richer and more nuanced discussion than Msgr. Marchetto and other authors would like. The first level of study belongs



to the historian, whose criterion of truth consists in the verification and evaluation of facts. The second level belongs to the theologian, the pastor, and in the last instance the Sovereign Pontiff, supreme guardian of the truths of faith and morals. It involves two distinct levels, yet linked and interdependent, as are soul and body in the human being. But it is only after the historical reconstruction, and not before, that the pastors may step in to formulate their theological and moral judgments.

The two levels, historical and hermeneutical, cannot be conflated, unless one were to concede that history coincides with its interpretation. This means that the Second Vatican Council must be studied not only on the theological level, but first of all on the historical level as an event. The theologian brings his mind to bear on the documents; the historian, without neglecting the texts, focuses his attention in particular on their origin, their consequences, and their context. The historian and the theologian both seek the truth, which is the same, but they reach it by different, not opposite, paths.

Historical Work

It seems that Cardinal Ruini entrusted Msgr. Marchetto the duty of opposing the historical work of ultra-progressive stripe coming from Giuseppe Alberigo and his “Bologna School.” But in order to counter Alberigo’s and fellow-scholars’ tendentious history it is not enough simply to assert that the conciliar documents have to be read as being in continuity with, and not as breaking off from, Tradition. For instance, when in 1619 Paolo Sarpi wrote a heterodox history of the Council of Trent, he wasn’t challenged with the dogmatic canons of Trent, but with a different history, the famous history of the Council of Trent written at the behest of Pope Innocent X by Cardinal Pietro Sforza Pallavicino (1656-1657). History is challenged with history, not theology. That is why Msgr. Marchetto’s criticism of my own study, *Il Concilio Vaticano II: Una storia mai scritta*³ missed the mark. I am in fact neither a “discontinuist,” as Marchetto insists on repeating, nor a “continuist,” because I judge this label to be as unmeaningful as the first.

I am simply an historian who intends to tell truthfully and objectively what happened, not only during the three years the Council was held, from October 11, 1962, to December 8, 1965, but also during the years

preceding it and immediately following it, the so-called postcouncil. I take as my own the wish Cardinal Ruini expressed on June 22, 2005, concerning Msgr. Marchetto’s endeavor (“It is about time historiography produced a new reconstruction of Vatican II that is also, finally, a factual history”), but I do believe that it is counterproductive to hide historical truth behind the veil of a “hermeneutic of continuity” poorly understood. My reading of the Council diverges radically from that which the School of Bologna historian Giuseppe Ruggieri proposes in his recent work *Ritrovare il Concilio* [Recovering the Council] (Einaudi, 2012), but I cannot disagree with him when he affirms that the duty of the historian consists in “knowing from the primary sources what really happened and understanding the import of what really happened,” and when he explains why the Second Vatican Council cannot be equated with its decisions (pp. 7-11).

I have already had occasion to write as much: Councils can promulgate dogmas, truths, canons, which emanate from the Council but which are not the Council. The Council is distinct from its decisions which, only when they are promulgated infallibly, become an integral part of Tradition (*Apologia della Tradizione: Proscritto a Il Concilio Vaticano II, una Storia mai scritta*). How can it be denied that Vatican II has a “specificity” in relation to other historical events, and that it constituted in many respects a “revolution”? Testimonials to that effect were expressed on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the opening of the Council and reported by *Avvenire*, as well as that of the Canadian sociologist Charles Taylor, who remembered the event with these words: “It was like the fall of Jericho” (*Avvenire*, July 26, 2012).

Pastoral Dimension

The chief novelty of Vatican II was its pastoral nature. Cardinal Walter Brandmüller gave a good explanation of it. Councils, beneath and together with the Pope, exercise the solemn teaching authority in matters of faith and morals, and they stand as supreme judges and legislators in matters of law and discipline in the Church; but Vatican II, unlike previous Councils, “did not exercise jurisdiction, nor legislate, nor deliberate about questions of faith in a definitive manner. It was rather a new kind of council insofar as it defined itself as a pastoral council intending to explain to the contemporary world the doctrine and teaching

of the Gospel in a more appealing and instructive way. In particular, it pronounced no anathemas....On the contrary, the fear of uttering both doctrinal censures and dogmatic definitions resulted in the emergence from the Council of statements of which the degree of authority and hence the binding character were extremely varied....The conciliar documents command different levels of acceptance by Catholics. This is also something completely new in the history of the Councils."⁴ The studies of Msgr. Brunero Gherardini remain the fundamental reference point for an evaluation of the degree of assent required by its teachings characterized as pastoral—a surprising characteristic, for in the twenty preceding ecumenical councils, the form has always been doctrinal and normative. As Enrico Maria Radaelli observed in his thorough study of the language of Vatican II, "doctrinal definition"⁵ is the "natural form of the Church's language."⁶

Pastorality was not only a "fact," that is to say, the natural explanation of the dogmatic content of the Council adapted to its time, since that had always been the case. Neither Vatican Council I nor the Council of Trent was devoid of a pastoral dimension. "Pastorality" was, on the other hand, elevated to the level of an alternative principle to "dogmatism," implying a priority of the former over the latter. The pastoral dimension, of itself accidental and secondary in relation to the doctrinal dimension, became primary in fact, effecting a revolution in language and mentality. An author not belonging to the School of Bologna, Fr. John O'Malley of Georgetown University, defined Vatican II as a "language-event," explaining that in place of professions of faith and canons was substituted a "literary genre" he identifies as "panegyric-epideictic," that is, the "art of persuasion."⁷

The Church discarded its dogmatic habit in order to don a new pastoral, persuasive one, no longer binding and defining. But expressing oneself with a different vocabulary from that of the past means accomplishing a deeper cultural transformation than is apparent. Style of discourse and the way in which things are presented in fact reveal a way of being and thinking: "Style," O'Malley reminds us, "is the ultimate expression of meaning. It does not adorn meaning but is meaning."⁸ One might add that revolution in language does not only consist in changing the meanings of words, but also in omitting certain terms and notions. Numerous examples could be given: the

assertion that hell is empty, which the Council did not do, is certainly a rash, if not heretical, proposition. Omitting or limiting as much as possible any reference to hell as the Council did avoids the formulation of any erroneous statements, but constitutes an omission that paves the way for an error worse than an empty hell: the idea that hell does not exist because no one talks about it. When something is ignored, it is as if it did not exist. But this language did not prove to be adapted for effectively expressing the religious and moral message of the gospel. By declining to teach the whole truth with authority, the Church has also declined to choose between yes and no, between black and white, thereby opening up broad zones of ambiguity.

It is not by chance that the chief characteristic of the conciliar documents is ambiguity. Romano Amerigo was the first to spotlight the "amphibological" character of the conciliar texts, that is, their fundamental ambiguity, which enables them to be read either in continuity or discontinuity with previous Tradition. An ambiguous document can be explained in the sense of continuity, as Benedict XVI strives to do, or in the sense of discontinuity, as the progressive theologians do, but it never has the limpidity and clarity possessed by the great Council documents from Nicaea to Vatican I, to which one can refer without error.

According to the School of Bologna, the pastoral dimension must be considered as a doctrinal novelty implicit in the opening speech of John XXIII who presented the Council as "a step forward toward a doctrinal penetration and a formation of consciousness." Ruggieri declared that it was question of a "new doctrinal orientation consisting especially in the reinterpretation of the vital substance of the Gospel in the language required by the present history of men and women...." The apparently merely verbal rupture was in reality, according to the Bolognese, a doctrinal rupture, because for them the way one speaks and acts is doctrine becoming praxis. How can we not see in this conviction, which was then that of Dossetti, and which is the conviction today of his successors through Alberigo, the transcription within the bosom of the Church of the Gramscian category of praxis in fashion during the 1960s?

Praxis was the way the Church related to the world; and the Church in fact changed over the years, abandoning, for example, ...the Latin language, a style



of preaching based on apologetics, and its definitional, juridical style.⁹ Vatican II did not deliberate in an explicit, solemn manner about their suppression, and yet the wind from the Council swept away these three pillars of Catholic communication, replacing them with a new way of expression and of speaking to the faithful. Once the primacy of praxis was accepted, then came adoption of modern communications methods as veritable ecclesiastical categories.

The adoption of the language of communication proper to the world compelled the Church to submit to its rules. This explains the role of the “paracouncil,” to which responsibility was assigned for consequences that resulted from the conciliar event itself.¹⁰ The error of the School of Bologna is not to highlight the scope of the pastoral revolution, which “continuist” theologians and historians try to minimize, but to present it as a “new Pentecost” for the Church while passing over in silence its catastrophic results. Their error does not lie in their historical reconstruction, generally correct, but in the pretention, typical of modernist immanentism, to make of history a theological locus.

“Listening to the Word of God” becomes for them listening to the Word being revealed in historical becoming. For Ruggieri, the truest expression of this historical hermeneutic would be the Constitution *Dei Verbum*, while in its introduction and No. 2, “it does not separate revelation from the event of its being heard, and thus introduces history itself as a constitutive element of the auto-communication.” The most direct expression of this historical hermeneutic is certainly *Gaudium et Spes*, for in the drafting of this constitution the fundamental orientation was that of an appreciative look at history as the place in which the call of God actually occurs, an explicit recognition that “the Church herself knows how richly she has profited by the history and development of humanity” (GS, 44).

The road to be taken is not the one indicated by Giuseppe Ruggieri, nor that indicated by Msgr. Marchetto, but by a return to the grand historiographical tradition of the Church. Contemporary Biblical hermeneutics postulates the utilization of the historical-critical discipline for the analysis of the human dimension of Sacred Scripture, and for bringing out its truths above and beyond simple apologetics. But if, as contemporary exegetes affirm, the royal road

to studying Sacred Scripture is the historical-critical method, it is hard to understand why the same type of study should not be applied to an historical event like Vatican II. One is amazed to see on the one hand the attempt to demythologize Scripture pursued to the point of denying central dogmas of the Catholic faith, and on the other the attempt to divinize Vatican II by making it a “superdogma” that admits of no critique nor revision of any kind.

In 2012, Cardinal Walter Brandmüller, president emeritus of the Pontifical Committee for Historical Sciences, sponsored a few study seminars on Vatican II, assembling specialists of differing perspectives. These sessions were a good opportunity to remove from Vatican II the veil of “untouchability” that has prevented serious inquiry, and made of it the object of a calm analysis aiming to place it within the context of Church history, not as the first nor the last, but as the twenty-first ecumenical council of the Church. It is to be wished that the Year of Faith inaugurated by Benedict XVI will contribute to this work of historical revisionism, so important for understanding the causes of the contemporary moral and religious crisis.

Translated from the *Courrier de Rome*, November 2012, version of an article first published in *Il Foglio*, October 9, 2012.

¹ *The Second Vatican Ecumenical Council: For a Correct Interpretation* (Rome: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 2012).

² *The Second Vatican Ecumenical Council: A Counterpoint for the History of the Council* (Rome: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 2005).

³ Lindau, 2011. The English translation has been published: *The Second Vatican Council (an unwritten story)*, tr. Patrick T. Brannan et al., ed. Michael J. Miller (Loreto Publications, 2012).

⁴ Walter Cardinal Brandmüller, “Il Vaticano II nel contesto della storia conciliare [Vatican II in the Context of the History of the Ecumenical Councils]” in *Le ‘chiavi’ di Benedetto XVI per interpretare il Vaticano II* [Pope Benedict XVI’s Keys for Interpreting Vatican II] (Siena: Cantagalli, 2012), pp. 54-55.

⁵ “la forme définitoire.”

⁶ *Il domani-terribile o radioso-del dogma* [The Tomorrows-Terrible or Radiant-of Dogma] (Edizione Aurea Domus, 2013).

⁷ John W. O’Malley, *What Happened at Vatican II?* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2008), pp. 47-52.

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 49.

⁹ *La Bella addormentata: Perché dopo il Vaticano II la Chiesa è entrata in crisi, Perché si risveglierà* [Sleeping Beauty: Why the Church Fell into a Crisis after Vatican II and Why She’ll Wake Up].

¹⁰ Don Enrico Finotti, *Vaticano II 50 anni dopo* [Vatican II fifty years later] (Fede & Cultura, 2012), pp. 81-104.

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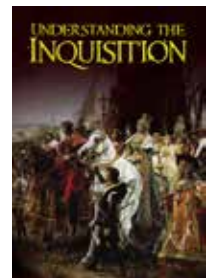
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Dear Angelus Press,

I was particularly drawn to the article in your November-December 2012 Issue called “Ten Ways to Improve the Catholicity of Your Marriage.” I don’t think I’m speaking just for myself when I say that as a married man with a family it can be tough to make a plan for the spiritual growth of your family and actually implement it. It always seems that something (dinner, clean-up, homework) gets in the way of progress. I love that Mr. Rayes offered very specific, and easy ways to work on this, but the thing that intrigued me the most was his sixth point: “Choose a ‘virtue of the month’ for your family.”

I know he says that the father should choose the virtue of the month and then work on it with his whole family, but I’ll be honest and say I don’t know where to start. Are there any traditional guidelines for this?

Thanks,

Chris, Ohio

Ed. Note: We asked Mr. Rayes to respond to the above question; his answer is below.

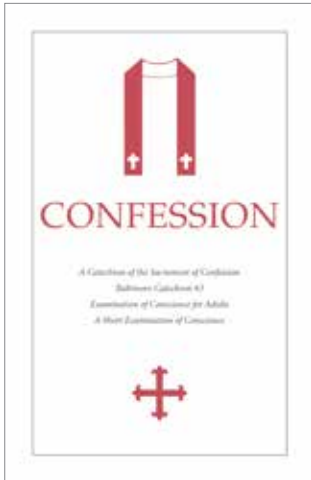
Dear Chris,

Thank you for the kind words. Following the wisdom of the Church, virtues may be categorized into three areas: Intellectual (natural), Moral (also known as cardinal), and Theological.

The intellectual virtues include wisdom, knowledge, and understanding (as a natural virtue, not a gift of the Holy Ghost). The cardinal virtues are prudence, justice, temperance, and fortitude. The theological virtues are faith, hope, and charity.

From these “principal” or “directing” virtues, a whole host of other virtues may be practiced. For example, humility and modesty are daughters of temperance. Of all these virtues that strengthen and refine us, only one remains within the human soul in heaven: charity. Everything else ultimately points to or takes away from this virtue, because it flows directly from the essence of God Himself. See the *Summa Theologica* of St. Thomas Aquinas for a strong explanation of the virtues. A great reference is also the old *Catholic Encyclopedia*. You can find the entire set online, available free, including searchable keywords. Trust your own God-given judgement as a father. When you notice your kids elbowing each other to scoop more pasta, generosity would be an appropriate virtue. Modesty is a good virtue for the summer. Docility might be good for December when children tend to build up anxious hope and attachment to their pending Christmas gifts.

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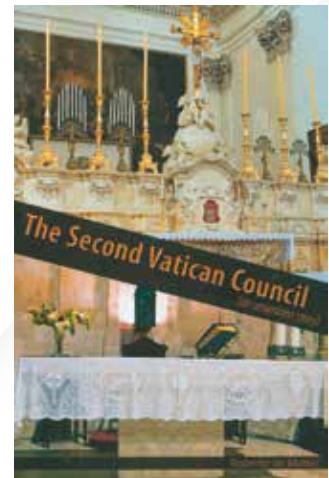
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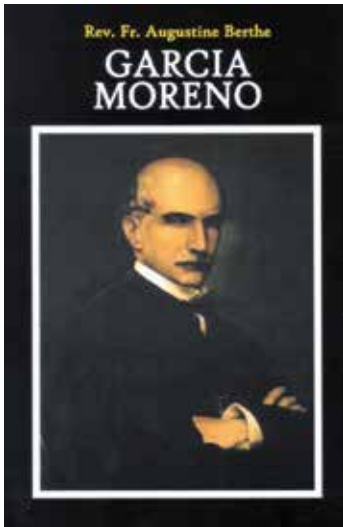
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Garcia Moreno

“The death of Garcia Moreno is the death of a Martyr.” — Pope Pius IX

It is fashionable, even among those principally opposed to religious liberty, to claim that in today’s world, a Catholic nation is no longer possible. The time, they say, for this is long passed, even if we oppose the false doctrine of religious liberty.

Is the Blood of Christ less efficacious than it was 2,000 years ago? Against those who would argue in this way, the martyred president of Ecuador, Garcia Moreno stands out as a resounding no! In this truly definitive biography, Fr. Berthe examines the entire life of Moreno from his childhood, through his political life, and finally for his death at the hands of Christ’s enemies. A must-read for anyone who wishes to restore Christ to His rightful place in society.

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The Last Word

Dear Readers,

Producing art presupposes a mind using material means such as words, sounds, colors, measurements, materials in order to express realities that go beyond the realms of material things. Art for this reason is only conceivable for a mind imbued with higher ideas, gifted with special sensibilities, for a mind gifted with an exceptional talent for expression. An artist has to use the material world and means, and at the same time he has to raise it up to a higher level.

The Gothic cathedral, for example, is a building supported, not by walls, but by pillars. The stone structure is supposed to be pointed; the accentuation of the vertical axis is one of the defining characteristics of Gothic architecture. A large number of huge glass windows replace the stonework and makes the edifice extremely transparent. Light plays an important role in this design.

This transparency applies to multiple aspects of the visible and invisible world: the cathedral does not only want to be transparent to the light of the sun, it wants to be transparent to supernatural reality, to heaven, to the divine light. The cathedral provides much more than a roof over one's head: it is a reminder that forces the visitor to look up, to raise his eyes and to fix his desires upon the things which are above the world.

Gothic master builders were convinced that order is based on the laws of mathematics. The ratios we find in geometry, in music and in the cosmos should be found in the proportions of the cathedral so that it will be harmonious and perfect. Architects therefore studied these laws and found out about the correspondence between musical harmonies and the geometric system of measurement in order to apply them to their buildings. The cathedral as a model of order is a reflection of geometrical and cosmic proportions, is music translated in the language of stones. Johann Wolfgang von Goethe said: "I have the impression that the whole temple is singing."

Modern times—materialistic, practically minded, profit seeking and following utilitarian principles as major guidelines—have a limited appreciation of what is beautiful, timeless and ingenious. A large section of the population in reference to beauty and aesthetics would rather prefer easy pleasure and emotional satisfaction.

The challenge and aim of the Angelus team was to offer a useful guide to the source of spiritual and artistic richness of Catholic life. To the alert eye, going attentively through this edition, the exceptional value of beauty will become apparent. We hope the diligent reader will learn that art is much more than just a mere human work and that real architecture transcends the sphere of lines and numbers.

In Christo,

Father Jürgen Wegner

Society of Saint Pius X



S S P X

The Society of St. Pius X is an international priestly society of common life without vows, whose purpose is the priesthood and that which pertains to it.

The main goal of the Priestly Society of Saint Pius X is to preserve the Catholic faith in its fullness and purity, to teach its truths, and to diffuse its virtues. Authentic spiritual life, the sacraments, and the traditional liturgy are its primary means of bringing this life of grace to souls.

The Angelus aims at forming the whole man: we aspire to help deepen your spiritual life, nourish your studies, understand the history of Christendom, and restore Christian culture in every aspect.

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